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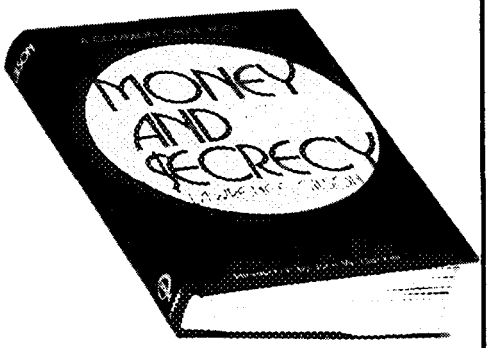

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In Praise of the Property Tax

by Mason Gaffney

These days the property tax is about as popular as a return to Prohibition. There were few issues on which George McGovern and Richard Nixon agreed in the recent campaign, but the need to reduce—if not abolish—the property tax was one of them.

The horror stories abound. One McGovern television commercial focused on the plight of an elderly widow with an income of about $1,700 who told the camera that she had to pay one third of it in property taxes. Was it any wonder that McGovern declared on the hustings that "there is no more regressive form of tax" and called for "federal incentives to states to adopt more progressive taxes"?

Nixon, like McGovern, borrowing the property tax issue from George Wallace's ideological baggage, defended both revenue sharing and the ill-fated value-added tax as ways of raising enough revenue to allow local governments to cut property taxes. Waxing rhetorical in his acceptance speech to the Republican convention, Nixon pledged to reduce the property tax, which he said is "an unfair and heavy burden for the poor, the elderly, the wage earner, the farmer, and those on fixed incomes."

The current drive against the property tax was accelerated by a 1971 California Supreme Court ruling. In the Serrano case, the court held that the current system of financing schools through local property taxes was unconstitutional because it discriminated against children living in communities too poor to raise adequate educational funds through real estate taxes.

But the real catalyst to the movement wasn't court decisions, it was well-publicized "taxpayer revolts" where voters repeatedly defeated property tax hikes necessary for the continued operation of schools and other local services.

In some areas with high tax rates, like Newark and Youngstown, voters were clearly saying that they could not afford another rate hike. But here the underlying problem was not the property tax itself, but its unfair application. When the vagaries of local boundaries enclose an area with a low taxable base, the homeowners living there must pay a much higher tax than if they owned a home of similar value in the wealthy suburbs. The variation in rates can be extreme, ranging from nearly zero in parts of the southwest to six or eight per cent of the property's value in the northeast. There are wide variations within the same metropolitan area as well.

Despite these taxpayer revolts, it can be argued that the property tax is basically a popular tax. How many other taxes would exist at all if they had to be approved directly by the voters instead of funneled through their elected representatives? The property tax revolt is also partially

Mason Gaffney works for Resources for the Future. The longer article from which this was adapted is available from Resources for the Future, 1755 Massachusetts Ave. N. W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

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symbolic. Voters are using the ballot box in these local tax elections to express their discontent with the whole network of inequitable taxation in America—from loophole-ridden income taxes to notoriously regressive sales taxes to ever-escalating social security levies.

Yet many of these subtleties have been obscured by the national crusade to modify the property tax. Prominent liberal economists such as Joseph Pechman of the Brookings Institution have suggested that even the sales tax might be fairer than the property tax. The anti-property tax movement has even taken on an aura of radical chic. The radical majority on the Berkeley, California, city council has proposed a local payroll tax to replace the property tax. Designed to aid the poor, this plan will presumably benefit wealthy academics as well.

The Onus of Ownership

The motivation behind all these schemes to replace the property tax rests on the belief that such taxes are a far greater burden on the poor than on the rich. On closer examination, however, this is simply implausible. In America today, to own any property at all is to be better off than most. If one wants to escape the property tax, there is no simpler route than being too poor to buy real estate.

This point may seem obvious, but somewhere along the way it has gotten lost. Carried away by political rhetoric and economic analyses, many are now convinced that property tax relief is part of liberal orthodoxy. It is important to cut through this thicket of misconceptions and realize that in turning their backs on the property tax, liberals are abandoning one of their most potent weapons against the abuses of wealth in this country.

This confusion is a relatively new development. Historically, the property tax was feared by the wealthy. In early America, one of the reasons for a property qualification for voting was to exclude those who had nothing to lose by drastic hikes in the property tax. Throughout the West, settlers imposed these taxes as a way of deriving some public benefits from the large holdings of ranchers and speculators. Even today, most of northern Maine is unincorporated, largely because the giant paper companies are afraid of property taxes on their timber holdings. None of this makes sense if the property tax is really regressive.

The revisionist view of the property tax can probably be explained by two factors—the development of the income tax and the increasing sophistication of economic studies. The income tax provided a model progressive system to which all other taxes could be compared. Increasingly arcane economic analyses have made it possible to "prove" virtually anything through the adroit choice of variables and definitions.

In order to resurrect the property tax's reputation, it is important to define exactly what sort of system we

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are talking about. Put simply, the property tax is a levy at uniform rates on the current market value of property. Nothing in this definition includes either unfair administration or the problems raised in the Serrano case. Yet it is these abuses which critics emphasize in the mistaken belief that they are inherent in the property tax system itself.

Balkanizing Grosse Pointe

Like most other taxes, the property tax is often badly administered. Throughout the country, tax assessors tend to appraise property at less than its full market value. Unfortunately, large holdings and corporate property tend to be assessed at a much lower percentage of real value than one-family homes.

The second abuse, dealt with in the Serrano case, can be nicknamed "Balkanization." The economic equivalent of political gerrymandering, Balkanization is the maintenance of tax-rich enclaves like Shaker Heights and Grosse Pointe. With these rich tax sources cut away, those still living in the inner city or in blue-collar suburbs must pay exorbitant rates for inferior local services.

Each of the property tax's flaws has its analogue in the progressive income tax. For every friendly local tax assessor there is a tax lawyer helping the rich hide large portions of income in tax shelters. Balkanization is inherent in all forms of local taxation. Wisconsin, for example, allows local income taxes, and the suburbs generally have lower rates than urban areas.

Taken in its ideal form, the property tax is more progressive than the income tax for one simple reason—property is less equally shared in this country than income. This is easily forgotten, especially after staring at income-distribution charts that show half the population making much less than $10,000 a year and a handful making millions. But, compared to property distribution, the income charts seem to describe a society in advanced stages of socialism. To begin with, half the adults in America own no taxable property at all. But most of them do earn enough to pay income taxes.

Even after acknowledging that there are significantly fewer property taxpayers than those with taxable income, wealth is still more concentrated than income. While a tenth of the adult population receives about 30 per cent of the total income, the top tenth of the property owners hold between 50 and 60 per cent of the real estate.

Local examples are even more extreme. A 1971 study by a Nader task force, *Power and Land in California*, disclosed that the state's 25 largest landowners held 13.5 per cent of the private land in the state.

The Merry Widow

Even the plight of widows living on fixed incomes and trying to hold on to the family homestead in the face of ever-higher property taxes doesn't undermine this argument. Although it is only traditional for interest groups to hide behind selected widows, let's examine the plight of that elderly woman who pays $600 of her $1,700 yearly income in property taxes.

Answers to January puzzle:

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Taxes average about 1 to 1.5 per cent of the property's resale value. This means that a home on which taxes are $600 a year could be sold for $40,000 or more. This money, invested at five per cent in a savings account, would produce at least $2,000 in interest per year—or enough money for the widow to move into a $167-a-month apartment without touching her $1,700 yearly income or asking for any help from her children. If the property has value to her heirs, it is likely they would help with the taxes.

At about this point, critics of the property tax usually retort that it is deceptive to argue that only property owners pay real estate taxes because in the end *everyone* pays. The reasoning is that since apartment managers, office-building tycoons, and anyone else who rents out property must pay taxes on it, landlords will recover the tax from their tenants by raising rents. This phenomenon—which economists call "forward shifting"—means that the property tax is spread over the whole population, like regressive taxes such as the sales tax.

There is a certain gut appeal to this theory, mainly because it's easy to imagine the thoughts running through any landlord's head: Taxes up $2,000 next year? Then just raise each of my 200 tenants' rent by $10. But such petty-trader vignettes are notorious distortions of economic trends. Although both rents and property taxes have been going up steadily, a cause-and-effect relationship is difficult to establish.

A large share of the property tax—recent estimates say 40 to 50 per cent—is based on the value of the land alone, rather than the buildings on it. For various technical reasons, economists agree that land taxes cannot be shifted forward. One explanation is that higher taxes will eventually force some owners of idle land to build new housing, increasing the supply and thereby holding rents down.

These adjustments in the housing supply caused by a rise in property taxes don't happen overnight, of course. We are dealing here with long-term economic equilibria, the sort of slippery calculations that often daunt programs to stop inflation or control unemployment. But in the long run, evidence shows that the property tax is far less important in setting rents than the normal forces of supply and demand.

If it's true that the wealthy pay a disproportionately high share of the property tax, what sort of creative accounting is responsible for studies showing that property taxes weigh heavily on the poor?

The answer centers mainly on a point of language. Words lose their normal meaning when shifted into the world of economics or tax law. The implications of this are illustrated by a phenomenon known as the Reagan Effect. In 1970, a certain California resident reported no "adjusted gross income" on his federal tax form, but still had to pay heavy state and local property taxes. At first glance this

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might seem a perfect illustration of how the property tax victimizes the poor. But in this case the taxpayer was Governor Ronald Reagan. Many economists, however, persist in using "taxable," rather than gross, income to show how the property tax overburdens the poor.

First-Home Syndrome

Other economists are misled by the more simple-minded First-Home Syndrome. The basic fallacy here is the reasoning that taxes paid on the owner's "first" home are the only property taxes that matter. For most of us, this is a fair assumption, since our homes are more accurately described as "only" rather than "first." But, among the wealthy, other forms of property appear—vacation homes, tax-loss farms, and speculative real estate investments.

Several official studies analyzing the property tax have ignored this additional taxable property and have come up with predictably skewed results. A 1970 study for the District of Columbia local government was based solely on first-home taxes. Naturally, it concluded that the rich pay far less property tax than, in fact, they do. Wisconsin's Department of Revenue made the same mistake in 1971, releasing a similar first-home-only study "in defense of Governor Lucey's use of the income tax to provide property tax relief."

It's no wonder that politicians can point to academic studies "proving" that the property tax is regressive. The Reagan Effect makes the rich seem poorer than they are, and the First-Home Syndrome overlooks large portions of the property taxes the wealthy pay. Apart from their bearing on the tax system, these errors are a disturbing comment on the state of economic literacy in this country. The few times that these biases have been corrected in studies, the results have been startling. The Survey Research Center, for example, used "imputed" income rather than taxable income, and found the property tax to be progressive.

Besides being even more progressive than the income tax—if correctly administered—the property tax has several attractive features uniquely its own:

- It is the only major tax which is levied on wealth as well as income. In many ways wealth is even more important than income in determining who in our society has the greatest ability to pay. Wealth implies the ability to liquidate, and even more importantly, the ability to borrow.
- It is a tax which differentiates between the ease with which a speculator can make $10,000 on the real estate market and the sweat it takes a coal miner to earn the same amount, working long hours in unsafe mines.
- It is a way of compensating the general public for such government projects as roads, which tend to raise real estate values. The property tax is also a way of reimbursing those who were excluded when this continent was transformed from virgin land into private property.
- It helps plug loopholes in the income tax, which is turning increasingly into a regressive payroll tax. Ronald Reagan knows that income tax shelters are not exempt from property taxes. The tax also compensates renters for the special exemptions homeowners receive under income tax law.
- It can be administered more equitably than the income tax, if given the same level of professional attention. Income is an imprecise concept, and cash lends itself to concealment. Property stands there for the world to see, wearing a price tag provided by the market place.

We don't need property tax relief. What we do need is reform to get rid of the unfair practices of local assessors and to correct the inequities of differing local tax bases. A well-administered property tax could be our most progressive tax, not public enemy number one. ■

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Peril of the Month: Gas Supertankers

by Timothy H. Ingram

With environmentalists pushing for increased use of pollution-free natural gas and shivering schoolchildren agreeing with the international oil companies that an energy crisis is on the way, a whole new chapter in ocean commerce has begun: the massive importation, in fleets of supertankers, of liquefied natural gas (LNG).

Deals involving billions of dollars and billions of cubic feet of gas are now being negotiated with Algeria, Russia, and other gas-rich nations. Amid the dozens of other complications the deals involve—in foreign relations, balance of payments, domestic gas rates, and the specter of bargains akin to the Russian grain deal—some basic questions about the safety of LNG shipments have been overlooked. Had, for example, one of the two Standard Oil tankers which collided in San Francisco Bay in 1970 been a 900-foot LNG tanker, the impact might have released a cloud of combustible gas vapor and engulfed several square miles of San Francisco in a sea of flames.

Timothy Ingram is a contributing editor of The Washington Monthly.

Environmentalists have largely missed seeing the hazards of LNG. While climbing on the natural gas bandwagon, preferring it to dirty fossil fuels, they seem to be unconcerned about where the "wonder-fuel" comes from. Since domestic gas reserves are, if not depleted, at least running low, eyes have turned toward foreign sources. Getting the foreign gas involves risky and high-priced arrangements in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America—often requiring 25-year contracts, expensive liquefaction plants to freeze the gas for shipment, giant ships (costing two to four times as much as oil tankers) to carry it, and storage and regasification plants in the delivery cities where the gas is to be used.

To keep morale up for this campaign, the gas industry has hit on a single theme—Clean Natural Gas. Not only does gas burn clean, it spills

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clean. "The oil-slick problem of a damaged tanker, which we are familiar with, polluting the beaches and so forth, would not be a problem with gas ships," said the president of General Dynamics last June, while testifying before a House merchant marine committee hearing on his company's plans for $90 million LNG tankers.

In this gas-solves-all-ills view of the situation, a "spill" involving an LNG tanker would quickly clean itself up. The liquefied gas would simply evaporate and disappear, turning into a fluffy white cloud that would float out of sight.

There are some complications, though. The cloud would be flammable, and it would probably hang around long enough to ignite. At normal temperatures, natural gas (methane) is lighter than air, but as it poured out of a tanker at temperatures around −260 degrees Fahrenheit, it would form a dense, heavier-than-air blanket. This cold gas would sit in a layer along the top of the water and could drift into cities, ships, or whatever else was in the vicinity. In a spill, the vapor's volume would be roughly 250 times greater than that of the liquid gas, and it would cover a considerable area: the contents of one large tanker could stretch a dozen or more miles. Then, with the slightest spark, the cloud could create a holocaust equivalent to the burning of 100 *Hindenburgs*.

Not that LNG is the only dangerous cargo afloat: naphtha, ethylene, and liquefied propane gas (LPG) are also carried in bulk and are also fire hazards. But the grandiose plans being laid for LNG shipments have caused concern even in the industry itself. Gas companies, pipeline firms, shipyards, and others queuing up for this new form of liquid gold are investing some $1 million to study the hazards —but only after the LNG boom is already under way. Fourteen of the tankers are now in service, and 40 to 50 more are on order. By 1980, a world fleet of up to a hundred tankers will be ferrying the gas from points around the globe to the U. S., with smaller shipments to Japan. When the boats get to America, they will be unloaded at LNG facilities now planned for Boston, New York, Providence, Savannah, Los Angeles, and Cove Point, Maryland.

Lighting Up Cleveland

But sitting in the back of everyone's mind is what happened in Cleveland in 1944. The nation's first commercial LNG plant had been operating successfully there for over three years, filling increased demands for natural gas from the city's wartime industries. The advanced, almost magic, cryogenic technology made it possible to freeze natural gas in plentiful summer months, and store it for peak winter demand in a liquefied form (LNG), neatly compressed into a package one six-hundredth the size of the gas in its gaseous state. There were troublesome unknowns. Space age metallurgy was a long way off; wartime shortages meant that corners had to be cut, so the equipment was made of a second-choice metal. The gas had to be confined at −259 degrees Fahrenheit—a temperature that cracks even steel like glass. There was some talk of explosion, but it seemed unlikely as long as oxygen was kept out of the gas tanks.

On October 20, 1944, one of the four storage tanks suddenly ruptured, spewing forth 1.2 million gallons of LNG (equivalent to about 100 million cubic feet of gas). It was ignited, possibly by a cigarette, and burning LNG poured into the streets and sewers. Once in the confined space of the sewer pipes, the quickly vaporizing, burning liquid gas exploded with tremendous force. Any building or warehouse became a candidate for explosion as it filled with gas. Flames reached half a mile into the sky. When it was all over, 133 people were dead, 300 injured; 10 industrial plants, 80 houses, and 200 automobiles were seriously damaged, and the city sewer system over an area of more than 30

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acres was destroyed. Not enough of the gas tank was left to determine the exact cause of failure, but experts pointed to poor design, use of marginally flexible metal, poor insulation, and inadequate inspection.

Cleveland put the same damper on the LNG industry as the *Hindenburg* put on Zeppelins. But by 1958 the industry was back at it again, and in the mid-sixties it began a program to build LNG storage and freezing plants. There are now about 50 plants around the country. Thanks to technical advances since the Cleveland disaster, new plants are generally considered safe—or at least as safe as any plant dealing with other flammable materials.

The worry now is about what happens when you start importing the stuff, not in 10-foot-thick, reinforced-concrete storage tanks, but in thin-walled ships. As evidenced by the repeated oil spills, ships do collide (140 tanker collisions and "hard groundings" were reported to the Coast Guard in fiscal 1971 alone). For a large-scale release of gas, both the ship's double hull and aluminum-on-plywood gas tanks would have to rupture—but this has happened often in oil tanker collisions.

In any major collision, grounding, or spill, there would be a whole range of hazards, the exact sequence of which is hard to predict. But it's necessary to try to understand what might happen following a harbor accident involving LNG.

Two basic scenarios might follow a gas release: an immediate fire, caused by a spark from the collision, or the creation of a flammable vapor cloud.

Fire: The likely chain of events here is fairly easy to imagine. If the gas caught fire, it would generate tremendous heat—enough to vaporize and burn the rest of the liquid gas. Flaming liquid would pour over the entire area near the crash, immolating nearby ships.

Vapor Cloud: Here the options multiply and the possible range of disaster is more widespread. The fiery destruction of an LNG tanker is bad enough, but it is even more troubling to think that the gas cloud could blow up or burn after drifting into a city. A tanker which ruptured in, say, New York harbor might well flood Manhattan with flames. Such a fire could begin if nearby vessels ignited the cloud, as happened during a recent naphtha spill near Staten Island. There, a passing tugboat took on some of the vapor, which exploded in the tug's confined cabin space. The resulting fire flashed back to the ruptured naphtha ship.

How far the plume of gas would spread depends, among other things, on the rate of leakage, local breezes, trees and buildings deflecting its flow—and how soon it reaches a source of ignition.

Both industry and government have run studies on the plume spread, though neither study has been released. The government study, conducted by the Bureau of Mines last year in Pittsburgh, reportedly came up with about the same findings as a team directed by Dr. Walter G. May at the Esso Research and Engineering Center in New Jersey.

The May study, concludes that a spill in harbor waters would be an "unacceptable development," in the words of a Distrigas executive. The researchers went to the Gulf of Mexico and dumped 2,500 gallons of LNG. Dr. May explains what happened:

> The cold methane vapor. . . wants to spread out sideways just like pancake batter on a hot griddle. The bigger the spill, the bigger the spreading. In a large spill, it spreads out to beat hell.

Doom in a Plume

For a spill from just one of a ship's five 25,000-cubic-meter tanks, Dr. May said, given an eight-knot wind, predictions of an eight to 12-mile plume are roughly correct.

Worse, the gas hovering over a wide area might not just burn, but may actually explode. The free and unconfined gas would be hard to

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detonate. (To burn, LNG, which is 95 per cent methane, has to mix with about seven parts oxygen.) Though German experimenters have set off open-air gas explosions using small TNT blasts, Dr. David Burgess of the U. S. Bureau of Mines speculates that if LNG vapor seeped into a building and was touched off by a furnace or cigarette, it could blow up the building and in turn detonate the whole plume. Dr. Burgess adds, if it's any consolation, less than 10 per cent of the gas would be detonable, much would be too methane-rich or already dissipated. Still, there are recorded instances where seven per cent of the gas exploded, producing a leveling blast.

Once any part of the plume started to burn, a "flashback" sequence would probably follow. Anyone who has ever sprayed an aerosol can at a flame has a rough idea of how this works. From the point of ignition, fire rushes back to the main source of fuel. This could mean a large tongue of flame, moving through the city back to the tanker. There, it could surround the leaking vessel in burning seas. "The films I have seen of spills—one small spill, the cloud reached a flame, the flame started back to the source in a whoosh," according to G. H. Martin of Boston's Distrigas Company.

But this is not the last item on the danger list.

▪*Hull Cracking*: It would be bad enough if, as is usually supposed, only one of a ship's four or five tanks split. But the quirks of LNG might well open up the ship's whole hull and spill all the gas. The problem is the extreme temperature required to transport LNG. Tank walls are designed to withstand the cold, but ship hulls are not. If some LNG escaped from a tank and touched the hull, it could crack. Already there has been an accident in which a tiny amount of LNG, just a cupful, spilled on a tanker deck during unloading and caused a crack several feet long.

The odds on hull cracking are hard to predict. "If you get a spill in a tanker collision and the stuff comes gushing out, you can visualize a fair amount of it sloshing around the side of the ship," says Esso's Dr. May. "Then it's gonna crack." When the hull fractures, the effect on the gas tanks depends on how much strain is involved. To guard against the risk altogether would require the use of costly low-temperature hull metals.

▪*Burning the Ship*—Some experts feel the danger of a long, explosive plume drifting over a town has been overstated, mainly because the gas is likely to burn before it ever reaches town. Massive gas leaks would come from collisions, and as Dr. May says, "The chances of having a collision without having a fire are pretty damn remote."

"If you have a fire, that's it," May says. "The LNG's not going anywhere. You wouldn't get a plume all the way across Staten Island before it caught fire." But you would have 788,000 barrels of liquid LNG in the tanker to worry about.

Even if the fire started with only one leaking tank, it would almost certainly generate enough heat to break other tanks as well. With any sizable tanker, the LNG liquid would continue to spill even if aflame, and could surround the ship and cover the channel. The question then is, what else will be ignited: if the ship were 500 yards from shore, might it touch off oil and chemical storage tanks there?

▪*The Flameless Boom*: What little public attention the hazards of LNG have received has stemmed from a 1970 Bureau of Mines study, run for the Coast Guard. Researchers discovered that LNG, when thrown on water, could "explode" with a flameless but awesome boom. They concluded that the explosion could assume damaging proportions in an actual gas spill. Drawing on the report, Rep. Lester Wolff of New York called last fall for a halt to LNG-tank construction in populated areas.

The results of the test were a

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surprise to everyone. After a sequence of uneventful trials, researchers found that three seconds after they spilled a little LNG into an aquarium filled with water, a flameless explosion took place, blowing up the entire aquarium. No one was sure what had happened. Most felt it was the result of "superheating"—when the cold LNG hit the warmer water, it evaporated violently and set up a pressure wave.

Just how big a threat this "violent vaporization" poses is not clear. Scientists working for Shell Pipeline claim that the explosions will take place only under special circumstances when the methane content is low, and in recent tests, the Bureau of Mines has not been able to get the LNG to blow up. But in other tests at the Argonne Laboratory, the same type of explosion has definitely been caused by injecting LNG underwater—which might happen in a really massive dump which sent LNG cascading below the waves.

Boston Harbor

To see what our government is doing to protect against LNG hazards, I went to Boston harbor recently, to the office of the Captain of the Port. Boston is the only U. S. harbor experienced in handling liquefied gases, with Boston Gas Company, Exxon, and Distrigas receiving regular shipments.

On the morning of my visit, the *Havis*, a 15,000-cubic meter Norwegian propane tanker (whose structure is basically like an LNG tanker) was due at 7 a.m.; we took a launch out to meet her.

On the way out, Coast Guard Lieutenant David Blomberg outlined the procedure for an incoming gas tanker. Ships must give 48 hours' notice of arrival. LPG and LNG vessels may dock only during daylight, in good weather. The ships are escorted by tugs, so that if a fire starts, the tugs can pull the ships out into the middle of the harbor. The transfer operation crew must be able to speak English. Since all LNG ships now in operation are foreign-flag vessels, this sometimes poses a problem. "Yeah," Blomberg cracked, "they know English until a problem comes up, then they no longer speak it."

Part of the Coast Guard's job is to check the ship's safety equipment. This includes two types of early-warning systems: gas detectors placed in the insulation on each gas tank and elsewhere around the ship; and thermocouples which register changes in temperature and therefore might detect leaks of the cold LNG.

"The last two LPG ships in here were shitboxes." Blomberg said. "One didn't even have the gas detector system turned on. It was disconnected. It hadn't been properly set, and they were getting a continuous alarm on it, and had just shut it off entirely. They didn't have a repair manual for it, didn't know how to fix it, and couldn't have cared less."

Crews usually don't keep logs or records of readings. "Our regs say they have to take readings every 30 minutes in U. S. waters." But, says Marine Inspection Officer Harold Brackett, "We just don't know if they run them at all."

The French tanker *Descartes* got all the way into the harbor on its second voyage and was unloading when it was noticed she had cracks in her tank membranes. Crew members had disguised the leak by purging the area surrounding the tanks of LNG vapor with inert gas, so the monitoring devices had reported no methane presence when later tested by Coast Guard inspectors.

Larry Everman, also of the Coast Guard's Boston port safety office, remarked that he had been given no specific training in fighting an LNG fire. "But they showed us a movie where they stuck a fireman's rubber boot into LNG and the bottom froze and cracked off when they picked it up. Jeezus."

No one is really quite sure how to fight one of these fires. The natural tendency most harbor firefighters

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have is to throw water on it. Captain Robert G. Schwing, chief of the Coast Guard's hazardous materials division, explained: "I would just get all the people evacuated from the area first, throw some water on the surrounding buildings, and let the gas burn. It would be better to let it burn itself out, otherwise the gas would just continue floating around on the water, go downwind, and cause worse hell somewhere else."

Acceptable Risks

When we boarded the *Havis*, we learned that the crew, rather than an international certification team, had set the relief valves. Too much pressure inserted around the tanks could crack them, and there was no way of knowing whether the crew had set true pressure readings. The captain assured us there was no problem, however, signed the standard form, and said the gas detector system had been checked "continuously." Yet when turned on, the gas alarm buzzer blurped, red lights shone, and the reader indicated the control room where we were standing contained the lower flammable level of gas.

The captain was told he couldn't unload until a shore repairman came out and fixed the defective system. He was furious: "You can't run a ship like this without expecting some minor problems."

In the end, the hardest question to answer is who should be responsible for heading off the holocaust. All along the line, officials shuffle their feet when asked this question and point at the man down the hall. The Coast Guard, for example, can lecture ship captains when their gas gauges don't work, but they say there's not a lot they can do about broader issues of safety. "LNG is considered an 'acceptable' risk," says Captain Schwing, "The placement of the terminals is in the hands of the local people; it's not our responsibility."

Within its limited authority, however, the Coast Guard has done what it could. During a recent dispute over placement of gas terminals on the East Coast, Schwing made five of his staffers available to local authorities. "All we could hope to do was terrorize these people into considering the dangers of ship collision," he said. "Maybe it was an unlawful use of government monies to do it, but I thought we had a moral authority."

The gas companies apparently feel no such stimulus. Nearly all have gone ahead with the orders and construction plans first and scratched their heads about safety afterwards. As G. H. Martin explained: "We stuck our necks out and said, look, there's an energy shortage. . . so we put our money on the line, signed up contracts, and built terminals. At the same time, we said, people are raising serious questions. So let's study them."

Shipments like those into Boston will become more and more frequent in the coming years if many of the pending LNG deals go through. Some 30 projects are now being discussed or developed around the world, and new agreements are announced almost weekly.

The largest U. S. deal approved so far is for the importation of Algerian LNG by the El Paso Natural Gas Company, the nation's largest gas pipeline company. The $1.7-billion deal will run for 25 years and is predicted to provide as much as 10 to 15 per cent of the total East Coast gas supply by the 1980s. Distrigas has also contracted for Algerian gas—31 shipments a year by 1976—and has built facilities in Boston and Staten Island.

But both of these agreements pale when compared to the biggest deal of them all—a contract worth a reported $45 billion now being worked out between Russia and a triumvirate of U. S. companies. The three firms—Tenneco, Texas Eastern Transmission, and Lyndon Johnson's favorite contractor, Brown and Root—plan to spend $10 billion to build gas facilities which will later be transferred to Russian ownership. To move the gas

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from Murmansk on the Barents Sea to the East Coast of the U. S., and from the Eastern Siberian plateau to West Coast ports, would require a fleet of some 30 LNG tankers. The dealings have cooled off slightly under White House scrutiny, but a U. S. decision on the deal is expected this spring.

What resistance there has been to LNG plans has come mainly from those who live next to the tanks and ports. On Staten Island, homeowner groups with names like Citizens' Committee Against a Fiery Death have exhausted themselves protesting Distrigas' construction of two enormous tanks in the area. The protests failed and the tanks are going up, but the citizens have the consolation of at least one droll memory. Last August, Distrigas official Gene Fetteroll put on a display of LNG safety which he capped by boldly plunging a burning cigarette into a dish of LNG. The skeptical locals then insisted that Fetteroll demonstrate outdoors, where, as the local papers reported, "the vapors ignited instantly into a small fireball."

Nice Place for a Picnic

At another citizens' protest against LNG ports, in Cove Point, Maryland, environmental groups made what can most kindly be called a bizarre intrusion. After discovering that Columbia Gas System wanted to build an LNG terminal at a scenic spot which the state intended to buy for park land, the environmental groups urged that the tanks be moved to an industrialized, populated region instead. Protecting the shoreline was the right idea, but moving the tanks closer to people suggests a strange trade-off between scenery and safety. Columbia is still building the facility on the coast. For a last incredible touch, environmentalists urged that some 600 acres intended as a "blast buffer zone" around the tanks be opened as a public park.

Government agencies have also been reluctant to face the basic policy question: Should we allow *any* LNG imports? The Federal Power Commission's recent decision to approve the deal between El Paso Natural Gas and Algerian suppliers was a one-shot ruling, concentrating on the specifics of the case rather than on overall energy-planning for the future. It is important that the general decisions be made, and that we examine alternatives before welcoming fleets of LNG tankers.

One aspect to consider is the tremendous cost of the LNG plans. The government is picking up the tab for a 25 percent subsidy on every $90-million LNG supertanker built in U. S. yards. And a hungry maritime industry is one of the strongest lobbies for the LNG imports. The publicly-funded Export-Import Bank is providing credits for the construction of the liquefaction plants and pipelines in Algeria and would be asked to help finance the Russian construction with a loan of $10 billion. This is 10 times as large as any loan the bank has made before, and there have been hints that the Treasury Department, in an unprecedented move, is considering setting up a special bank at the taxpayers' expense to finance just this deal.

Furthermore, the imports are driving up the cost of domestic gas, raising the value of U. S. reserves. The oil and gas companies provide the only figures on the size of reserves and have never fully admitted what exploration costs for new wells are. By allowing expensive LNG, the Federal Power Commission has virtually decontrolled gas prices. Officials say such options as coal gasification, solar energy, or gas from organic wastes, are a long way off, and the LNG is needed as immediate supplement—but it is left up to the industry to fund and set up a timetable for development of alternative energy sources.

The prospects for seriously stopping the LNG momentum long enough to take a look at it, seem dim. Like everything else, we seem to end up frying in our own juices. ■

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Tidbits and Outrages

Compromise on Capitol Hill

From the Congressional *Record* of October 18, 1972:

Mr. MILLS of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself five minutes.

Mr. Speaker, we have a rather unusual report to bring back to the House. It appears that both sides have won a great victory with respect to the limitation on spending. The Senate would not take our language, as Members know, and the House would not recede from its language, so with the enactment of this conference report there will be a ceiling on spending of $250 billion for one day.

At the end of that one day, the Senate language will prevail and that provision will become a nullity. In fact, any action taken under it will have no effect.

That was the only way, in fact, we could get the matter out of the two bodies, because the Senate had directed the President to do exactly what the House had directed him to do; namely, to hold the rate of spending to $250 billion, but in the process they refused to implement that directive by allowing him the latitude required to carry it out.

Mr. WHITE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the chairman, in his presentation did I understand him to say the President would have the power for one day, as we had discussed, to veto line items in the appropriations?

Mr. MILLS of Arkansas. Yes, but at the same time we say that anything he does on that one day is a nullity. He cannot really do anything under the provision.

Floating Loans for Aerospace

A new glimpse into the folkways of defense contracting was provided by Harry Flood Byrd, Jr., Virginia's senior senator, in a little-noticed Senate speech on January 4. Bryd, whose dedication to economy in government exceeds even his fidelity to the military establishment, was struck by a newspaper account that a new $18-million loan by the Navy to Grumman Corp. brought that aerospace giant's total indebtedness to the government to $54 million. Byrd recalled a 1970 amendment to the Defense Production Act of 1950 which limits all loans to defense contractors to a total of $20 million.

Hellfire and Buck Rogers

One of our favorite sources of light reading is the *Commerce Business Daily*, published by the Department of Commerce, which contains a list of government procurement needs and contract awards. A typical issue announces the award of contracts for "Analysis of Postattack Radiological Environments" and an "Investigation of Improved Kill Mechanism Employing Miniaturized, Multipoint Initiation Trains." And for Buck Rogers fans there's always the contract to build an "Advanced Development Airborne Laser Locater Designator System (ALLD) for Hellfire/CLGP."

Secret Service

Always on the lookout for new forms of public service, we were pleased to discover in a recent edition of the *Federal Register* that the Agriculture Department staff includes a "Confidential Assistant to the Confidential Assistant to the Secretary."

The Lawyers

An important element in our national anti-crime program is the identification of major criminal groups which can be singled out for special scrutiny by the law.

Linda Matthews of *The Los Angeles Times* has uncovered a potentially useful lead. She reports that one group is especially likely to break tax laws—lawyers. Internal Revenue Service figures show that the lawyers will be convicted of tax crimes at a rate 7.5 times greater than that for the general public.

One crime for which lawyers are not yet subject to prosecution is the high amounts they charge for real estate settlement. Ronald Kessler, in *The Washington Post*, wrote a thorough expose of this scandal last year. There was an attempt to put a ceiling on these costs, but then real estate lawyers and their banking and title insurance allies went to work. The outcome, as described by AP:

The House Banking Committee has voted to strip a proposed ceiling on settlement costs from a pending housing bill and to repeal the limited authority in existing law for setting maximums. . . . The committee [also] voted to permit kickbacks (payments for referral of business), but only if they are disclosed, are "reasonable," and are made in good faith.

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THE CULTURE OF BUREAUCRACY:

So Hard to Remember, So Easy to Forget

by William and Elizabeth Paddock

In the 1940s the American people began a long journey that was to take them to the hungry nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It became an emotional crusade involving the government, national foundations, church groups, universities, and scientists. Other "developed" countries one by one joined us in this crusade. The United Nations took up the cause, declaring the 1960s to be the "Decade of Development." The total cost to the American people to the beginning of 1971 was 100 billion tax dollars plus the money and energies of the many nongovernment organizations.

This enormous expenditure has been justified for many reasons, but the dominating motive has been the conviction that we "cannot live as an island of affluence in a sea of poverty," that if the world is to have peace it must be stable, and for the poor nations to achieve stability they must be "developed."

In the last few years enthusiasm for the crusade has flagged as the development of the poor nations seems, somehow, always to recede, no matter how much money is spent, no matter how many new ideas are put into operation. In fact, by now, the only people who remain enthusiastic seem to be those of the receiving countries (provided they get to spend the money, themselves, without strings), and the staffs of the massive (and firmly entrenched) development bureaucracies inside and outside the government. As for the stability of the world, seldom has it seemed more elusive. Fighting for it with the sword of development has come to seem rather futile and out of date.

The authors, firm believers in the doctrines of development and long involved in the struggle, believed now was the right time for a report about foreign aid which would be not only optimistic but useful as a guide showing how a variety of development projects had indeed succeeded. We were thinking of more than a glorification of all those thousands of people who have given up the amenities of their homes and gone out to strike development sparks in the suffering areas of the world's hungry nations. We wanted to give an account of a dozen or more effective development programs in the hope that the lessons learned from them could be applied elsewhere.

With nothing more definite than this in mind we set out to find the most promising region (not a single country) in the world to study. We began by talking to government officials, businessmen, diplomats, foundation officers, directors of international agencies, missionary groups, and the like. We asked, "What area in the whole world of development can we visit in order to see the most optimistic case for foreign assistance, an optimistic case based on valid

This article is adapted from William and Elizabeth Paddock's book, We Don't Know How, *to be published by Iowa State University Press this spring.*

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accomplishments already achieved, not on blueprints or future hopes?"

The almost universal consensus, at the end of 1967, was that we should go to Mexico and Central America. This was the area with the most promising growth statistics, the experts said, and the cause for this was largely aid from a number of different development organizations.

We asked key officials with both private and government development organizations to recommend their most effective programs in Mexico and Central America. We asked that they name programs that were at least three years old so we could see progress already accomplished, rather than progress hoped for. We wanted to visit and examine those specific programs which the administrators of development organizations themselves assured us were especially effective. It was important that the praise for the projects come from the men responsible for the planning and financing of them, rather than from the press or the people carrying out the work in the field.

We organized a list of "effective development projects" and traveled some 25,000 miles to inspect them. We not only held more than 200 prearranged interviews but talked with everybody in sight—government officials, scientists, merchants, peasants, laborers, doctors, and lawyers. Upon arrival at a project, our usual procedure was to be briefed by the officials in charge, who then would arrange our tour and go with us or send an aide to answer our questions in the field. Whenever possible, we returned alone to the project, so we could study it without official guidance. We wanted our study to be a genuinely independent audit.

The oddest thing came out of this research.

When we examined these projects in the field, we found they were not at all as described by the high officials back home (Peace Corps, AID, Inter-American Development Bank, and the rest). The projects were not necessarily ineffective; they were just different, sometimes unrecognizably so.

We do not question the sincerity of the officials who gave the recommendations, but certainly we now question the accuracy of the information fed back to them from the field. Always it is biased in favor of their programs. Always the reports are favorable. Journalists somehow never seem to write critical records of specific projects; perhaps it is because their studies are so often made on grants from the organizations being studied—or else they are hoping for grants for future studies. For the record, we financed this research trip ourselves, and thus were beholden to no organization.

Chocola Treat

An agricultural experiment station operated by the Guatemalan government is located at a town on the Pacific Coast called Chocola. This station was once the focus of a major U. S. effort to assist agriculture throughout this coastal area of Central America, and a lot of U. S. money went into it.

I had last visited Chocola in 1958 with Louis Franke, then head of the U. S. program for agriculture in Guatemala. He was about to be transferred to Argentina and was anxious to show me what he had accomplished before leaving Guatemala. "This is my major contribution," Franke said. He was rightly proud, for it was a beautiful experiment station.

Unlike most foreign aid administrators, Franke had brought to his job a good technical background and a lively interest in tropical farming. He knew that Guatemala's future depends on agriculture and he was able to convert this knowledge into action by getting the United States to put money into this station at Chocola and another at Barcenas.

At Chocola, a laboratory was built, followed by classrooms, dormitories, offices, a cafeteria, and so on—all with

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U. S. funds. Guest houses were constructed, and the station soon became a favorite spot for U. S. government personnel to visit.

Chocola was designed to become a major agricultural research center, concentrating on the problems of principal tropical commercial crops like coffee. It was also to be a training center offering short, practical courses to farmers and agricultural extension agents from all of Central America, so they could carry home with them updated knowledge of improved farming practices.

This preface will help explain why I was so pleased when Covey Oliver, assistant secretary for Inter-American Affairs in the Department of State, told me that one of the projects I should visit was an experiment station established with AID support at Los Brillantes, located near Chocola. I was doubly pleased because back in 1956 I had had a small hand in selecting Los Brillantes, from several possible sites, for a substation to augment the work at Chocola. Thus by visiting Los Brillantes, a project which Oliver indicated already shows "evidence of success or which [is] sufficiently well established so that a significant effect on development can be confidently predicted," I could also stop by and see Chocola.

Now, on this revisit to Guatemala's south coast, I could see at once a definite increase in cattle production. This seemed to jibe with a current policy in economic planning—namely, encouraging the developing countries to diversify their agriculture in order to alleviate dependence on a single crop—in the case of Guatemala, coffee. The planners say that such dependence makes a nation highly vulnerable to the vagaries of the international market and most governments have long tried to encourage the production of more kinds of crops.

But how to effect the diversification? That was the specific task assigned to Los Brillantes—a difficult one because theory and practice unfortunately are at odds.

Cashews and Oranges

Assistant Secretary Oliver had urged me to visit the experiment station at Los Brillantes precisely because it was effectively solving this difficult, complex problem; that is, it was finding crops into which Guatemalan farmers could diversify and still make money. With half of Guatemala's export earnings coming from one crop, he said, AID is keenly interested in helping Guatemala break the shackles of coffee dependency.

Oliver told me a great deal of progress had been made at Los Brillantes through the introduction of rubber and citrus as new crops. The station was supplying seedlings and advice on how to plant them, and AID was providing the loans needed to support this diversification. In addition, he said, research was moving ahead on other crops, such as black pepper, vanilla, cashews, allspice, mangos, tea and achiote.

At Los Brillantes, the first person I met was Raymond Stadelman, a man whose writings I have admired for so long I thought he must be dead. His *Maize Cultivation in Northwestern Guatemala* remains the classic background study on the agriculture of the highland Indians of Guatemala. Stadelman was now working here on rubber, and AID, according to Oliver, was greatly pleased with his progress.

Earlier, I knew, Los Brillantes had been kept busy for at least five years supplying rubber seedlings to Guatemalan farmers who had planted some 27,000 acres of rubber. Now, to my amazement, the place seemed dead. The reason, Stadelman explained, was that Guatemalan farmers were interested in planting rubber only as long as AID provided money on easy terms (such as a seven-year grace period before repayment begins).

When the loan money was used up (some loans were sizable: one farmer received $884,000) the station, once a beehive of projects, fell into the

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doldrums. With prices as low as they were, neither rubber nor citrus was sufficiently attractive to the farmer without the easy loan money.

Now Stadelman was working alone. Support from AID to the research station had been reduced solely to providing his salary. No one could have been less optimistic about the future of rubber cultivation in Guatemala than Stadelman himself. He was even less optimistic about the possibility of receiving the additional support needed to change the direction of this work or to revive it. I commiserated with him and left as he was preparing for a visit by Congressman Clarence Long of Maryland and Nathaniel Davis, the new U. S. ambassador to Guatemala. They would be arriving the next day for the same reason I had come—American officialdom had told them it considered this to be a good and thriving development project.

Why were the embassy and Washington continuing to send such visitors to see the "successful" AID program at Los Brillantes? Was it that they had not yet heard that the program had dried up?

Back to the Graveyard

From Los Brillantes I drove, for old times' sake, 30 minutes down the road to the station at Chocola. Superficially, it looked much as it had in 1958, except that the beautiful buldings were empty.

A second glance showed it to be a disaster area. Its staff consisted of a single agronomist, a Guatemalan, Efrain Humberto Reyna, who had the equivalent of a high school education in agriculture. With the help of only two field hands, he was trying desperately to manage this huge station. Never have I seen a harder working, more dedicated, or more lost soul. Poor fellow, he had literally nothing with which to work—no equipment, no help, and obviously, only hand-to-mouth money. He was puppy-dog happy to see me, as if I were the first visitor in 10 years. The whole station is presently funded, all from the Guatemalan government, the equivalent of $3,500 per year. Occasionally, Reyna is able to scrounge a little fertilizer from manufacturers. And that is his support.

And yet at the time of my visit, this was the one and only coffee research station in operation in all of Guatemala, a nation that still relies on coffee to pay for 36 per cent of all its imports. The total effort of government research to find more economical ways to produce this crop, to combat diseases and pests, to solve harvest and processing problems rested on the shoulders of this one man.

The dormitories, which U. S. tax money had built, had last been used six months earlier when they housed eight students for six days. The last course prior to that had been held nine years ago.

It is painful to go on. The Chocola station is today a graveyard where the forgotten bones of this carefully planned major aid program have been left to rot. The chairs, typewriters, desks, furniture—even the microscopes and pH meters—are still there, stenciled with the letters S.C.I.D.A., the long-forgotten alphabet soup designation for the cooperative program that operated for a few years as a joint venture of AID's predecessor, the U. S. International Cooperation Administration (ICA), and the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture.

Incredibly, I found there was no cooperation, nor had there been for years, between Chocola and Los Brillantes a few miles away. These two agricultural stations were separated as if by the Great Wall of China. The reason for this, I learned, was that there had been some jurisdictional scuffling between the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture and AID. The result: neither worked with the other.

Chocola is an illustration of one tragic aspect of our development work: *AID has no memory.*

AID programs are constantly

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scrapped, abandoned, or started anew —or forgotten. Budgets are cut and then, as an alibi, Washington primly says it is time for the local government to "take over." The local government, however, usually has neither the money nor the talent (nor, sometimes, the interest) to take over. Thus another orphan program joins the graveyard.

New foreign aid directors arrive in the capital, sweep the decks clean, and begin anew. Back home a President is elected and his new foreign aid administrator also sweeps clean. No one takes the time to learn. What preceded? Did it fail? Did it succeed? Why?

A long-time AID friend says, "Every morning we wake up and laboriously reinvent the wheel."

Cows and Bunny Rabbits

Wherever the United States has a foreign aid program it has a staff that supervises the spending of its money, plans its use, and cajoles the local government into actions intended to make the money effective. The staff is called a "mission" and the man in charge is the "mission director."

Deane Hinton, U. S. AID mission director in Guatemala, was fresh from the National War College and recently decorated with a Superior Honor Award. Undoubtedly Hinton, whom I found to be a likable man, was highly regarded as an administrator at AID's Washington headquarters.

Like AID mission directors around the globe, Hinton was filling an important post within the embassy structure. The AID director is generally the principal economic counselor to the ambassador. Although this was Hinton's first assignment in Latin America, he had served at several embassies in Europe and elsewhere, mainly as a political affairs officer. As is true of nearly all other AID mission directors, he had had no experience as a technician. Thus I was not surprised to learn that he knew little about agriculture even though this is the major economic business in Guatemala. But I was startled by the way he expressed it, although it was refreshingly honest.

"I don't know a cow from a bunny rabbit," he told me. "I'm a political economist."

I asked Hinton about how AID was performing in Guatemala. The answers he gave could have come from any of several other highly-regarded AID mission directors whom I have known.

Paddock: What is the most effective AID program in Guatemala?

Hinton: The agricultural school at Barcenas. We were able to convince the minister of agriculture that this agricultural school is important.

Paddock: The director said he was having a problem placing some of the graduates. Of the 26 new graduates in forestry, not one of them has a job in sight.

Hinton: I don't know about that.

Paddock: I understand Barcenas includes the forestry school the U. S. government helped establish 10 years ago and later helped merge with the agricultural school there.

Hinton: I don't know anything about that. You must remember that I have only been here 15 months. There is a lot about previous programs I don't know.

Paddock: Is any money going into the experiment station at Barcenas?

Hinton: What experiment station? There is no experiment station there in the sense any of us would think of one. It's a work farm for the Barcenas students. The farm is terribly run down, stupidly managed, and the United States has never helped it with funds.

Paddock: I don't mean the school's farm, I mean the experiment station. When I worked here in the 1950s this and the station at Chocola formed a major U. S. government effort. . . .

Hinton: I know nothing about it. I'm still learning. I have my hands full trying to keep track of what is going on today. I don't have the time to go through all the past records.

Paddock: What U. S.-supported

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project are Guatemala's officials most enthusiastic about?

Hinton: None. There is probably no one in the Guatemalan government who would be sorry about our leaving or even notice if we left tomorrow. I'm talking about projects. Loans are another matter. Everybody wants loans.

Paddock: I'm interested to know why you chose the Los Brillantes coastal experiment station and the nearby agricultural school at Barcenas as projects for the new ambassador to see on his first trip into the country last week, and also why you considered them worthy of inspection by Congressman Clarence Long, who went with him.

Hinton: The trip was planned for the Congressman and he didn't want any briefings. He wanted to get out into the country and these fit his two-day itinerary nicely.

Paddock: What is the most important thing AID can do in Guatemala?

Hinton: Be smart enough to operate as a catalyst for change. We should emphasize the training of people and the need for changes in their fundamental attitudes. In addition to giving them new technical skills, we should expose them to new ideas.

Paddock: How would you do this?

Hinton: We are doing it in a training program in social sciences at the local university.

Paddock: How did you happen to choose social sciences?

Hinton: We had a study made of the university, and the study showed this was the area of greatest need.

Paddock:, Who made the study?

Hinton: Gene Martin.

Paddock: What is his specialty?

Hinton: He is a social scientist.

This is an old story. In 1963 AID hired the Center of International Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to find an answer to the agricultural dilemma of the world's hungry nations. The center assembled a group of experts who set about interviewing agriculturalists and scientists from such other fields as anthropology, sociology, and psychology. The $100,000 study, published in book form, showed that each specialist finds solutions in terms of his own discipline. If you hire a social scientist to study the university, you end up with a solution that involves social science.

I myself am no different. Being a former corn breeder, I lose few opportunities to emphasize that corn is of major importance in Central America and Mexico. That I know this about myself makes me wary of the same bias in others.

Paddock: What do you consider Guatemala's most serious problem?

Hinton (after a discussion of some political dilemmas): Agriculture. And for the first time we are going to take a serious look at the Guatemalan farm picture.

He went on to explain that through his efforts, a contract had been arranged with Iowa State University to send a team of agricultural economists to Guatemala to make an analysis of the role of agriculture in the development of the Guatemalan economy.

Paddock: Why are you using Iowa State University?

Hinton: Because it's a good agricultural school.

Paddock: Are you familiar with the Iowa State-Guatemala Tropical Research Center, operated here by Iowa State from 1945 to 1955? That was the program which brought me to Guatemala originally.

Hinton: I've never heard of it.

Paddock: That program emphasized agriculture. It was then taken over by the International Cooperation Administration which, as you know, was the predecessor agency of your own AID. At one time the annual U. S. budget for Guatemalan agriculture was nearly $1 million. That certainly represented a major interest in those days.

Hinton: I've been here too short a time to know the details of previous programs. However, I know Iowa

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State is a good university and they have good men.

Of the four authors of the study for which Hinton had contracted Iowa State, only one was then in Guatemala. He was a young graduate student named Eric Graber, and I sensed he was doing most of the field work for the study. Our conversation went like this:

Paddock: Are you familiar with an earlier Iowa State agricultural program in Guatemala?

Graber: I have heard there was some kind of program but that's all I know about it.

Paddock: I am interested in what you think has been the most effective U. S. effort in Guatemala.

Graber: The Peace Corps. Of course I'm prejudiced because I was once with the Peace Corps.

Paddock: What do you consider to be the most effective AID program in Guatemala?

Graber: I haven't found one.

Paddock: What will your current study indicate?

Graber: We would like to determine the priorities for investment in agriculture.

Paddock: Do you know what use will be made of the report for which you are collecting data?

Graber: I really have no idea.

Even Iowa Forgets

In April, 1969, Iowa State University published the report, a full two inches thick, titled: *Agricultural Development and Policy in Guatemala*. When I read that its purpose was to review the extent "to which the agricultural sector has changed since 1950," I realized it covered part of the 1945-55 period when Iowa State had operated its own agricultural experiment station in Guatemala. Writing Graber, I asked if his group had consulted any of the reports published during the course of that earlier program. He replied: "I don't remember those specific reports." Thus, like AID, Iowa State, too, has no memory.

I wrote to Hinton some nine months after the report had been released, asking two questions: How has the report been used? Which of its recommendations have been acted upon? He replied that the report had been circulated widely but had "encountered a fairly general lack of interest."

Not surprising! The report begins with these deadly naive and patronizing sentences about a nation which, it would seem, no one at Iowa State had ever heard of before (in fact, they might have been written in 1852 by John L. Stephens, the first U. S. envoy to Guatemala):

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Guatemala lies just south of the Yucatan peninsula in Central America. It is bounded on the north and west by Mexico, on the east by Belice, to the south and east by Honduras and El Salvador, and on the southwest by the Pacific Coast. Although Guatemala contains only 108,889 square kilometers, approximately the size of the state of Louisiana, it has a very wide geographical diversity.

This study, remember, was intended primarily for Guatemalan officals and Americans stationed there. I wonder how many bothered to read through this two-inch rehash of all the appallingly familiar data which had been kicking around the back offices for years. Fifty officials? Twenty? Five? No one?

In his letter, Hinton commented that it was "still too early" to say which of the Iowa State recommendations would actually be put into practice, but "I am happy to tell you. . . the Government of Guatemala seems to have accepted. . . one of the recommendations, the idea of placing more emphasis on basic grain cereals, particularly corn."

Hinton's letter was postmarked Santiago, Chile. He had been transferred there to head up another program where, in the deeply entrenched tradition of AID, he doubtless was again starting from scratch.

When I wrote to the new U. S. mission director in Guatemala, his assistant answered, "I can assure you that the report has had a major impact. . . ." The result: another U. S. loan to Guatemala, this time for $23 million.

I did not have the heart to write to Hinton that the corn seed stock from the old Iowa State College-Guatemala Tropical Research Center is sitting in a storeroom at the experiment station at Barcenas. It was put in storage 10 years ago when ICA stopped funding the program. A faithful Guatemalan there is keeping the seed collection in what he believes is good order, just in case someday someone wants to use it.

How could this have happened? Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson, from his years of experience, pointed at the answer when, after a highly optimistic White House briefing about Vietnam by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he said President Johnson had been "led down a garden path. . . ." Actually, Acheson is more exactly reported to have said, "With all due respect, Mr. President, the Joint Chiefs of Staff don't know what they're talking about." He claimed that field reports written near the scene of combat in Vietnam were rewritten as they passed through each higher echelon. With each rewriting the reports reflected less and less the pessimism at the front and more and more the optimism that prevailed in the Pentagon.

The same reporting situation occurs with development projects in the "third world," and with the same result. Gunnar Myrdal, writing about South Asia, said, "Optimism, and therefore approaches that make optimism seem more realistic, is itself a natural urge for intellectuals. . . . All [economic] planning. . . tends to err on the side of optimism. . . . " This can similarly be found in Latin America and, I am sure, in Africa as well. (In virtually every interview for this book which involved an unfavorable view of a development project, I was told, "Don't quote me." But no one ever said that when their remarks were favorable. Thus the syndrome feeds upon itself.)

The most easily understood examples of this are the numerous congressional fact-finding missions where congressmen travel abroad to evaluate foreign aid projects. The congressman arrives at the foreign capital; he is met by the ambassador and the AID mission director. Off they all go to see the mission's best project, and at its best appearance. You remember, like Sunday dinner for the preacher or parents' day at school. Who shows the failures? Who would be so naive as to suggest showing them? Who even wants to see them? ■

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The First Four Years

This is the first month of President Nixon's second term—and of *The Washington Monthly*'s. While most people mark anniversaries by the decade, the political world counts by fours. And we most emphatically belong to that world. *The Washington Monthly* doesn't give its readers travel articles or film critiques; the diet is strictly politics and government. And the politics and government come with a point of view. We don't publish articles just because we think they are interesting. We must believe that on the whole they are right. We want them to have impact, to help change things for the better.

Take our first year, for example. Our second issue contained Tom Bethell's definitive article on the United Mine Workers. "Conspiracy in Coal." It led to five other articles in *The Washington Monthly*, and, we hope, contributed to Tony Boyle's defeat by Arnold Miller last December. In this, as in our other causes, we have had many allies, often with much more influence than our own. Still, it's good to play a part. For instance, another article in our second issue, Robert Benson's "How the Pentagon Can Save Nine Billion Dollars," cited the Air Force's Manned Orbiting Laboratory as the most obvious of possible cuts in the Defense budget. Within six months the program was dropped. Within two months of the appearance of then-Congressman Richard McCarthy's article on chemical and biological warfare, the Administration canceled the germ bombs.

Another first-year article, David Hapgood's "The Highwaymen," a very funny attack on the road lobby, was used by anti-highway forces in the successful fights against New York's Lower Manhattan Expressway and New Orleans' Riverfront-Elysian Fields Expressway. Hugh Sidey's February, 1969, interview with Bill Moyers predicted that the Nixon who was then saying he would rely primarily on his Cabinet would end up giving more power to the White House staff.

And the last issue of our first year brought Christopher Pyle's startling revelation of Army spying on civilian politics. The impact seemed immediate. The Army said it was sorry and would stop. But bureaucratic momentum was such that it took many more articles by Pyle as well as other writers and extensive hearings by Senator Sam Ervin to bring the scandal under control.

Some of our first-year predictions turned out to be embarrassingly wrong—Mayor Kevin White has not risen to national political prominence, the Model Cities program has been far from central to the Nixon Administration's urban strategy.

In terms of impact—or more precisely, the lack of it—our most

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depressing first-year failure was an editorial on Vietnam in October, 1969. It read in part:

> This is the editorial we never thought we would have to write, because this war was lost in 1954. The fact of its loss had been extraordinarily difficult for Americans to face—from Cardinal Spellman, the first villain of American Involvement... to Lyndon Johnson, so pathetically striving to be the Churchill-Roosevelt of the 1960s.
>
> Now Richard Nixon has dreams of a peace that will justify the lost American lives.
>
> One can understand him—as one can understand all the American Presidents who have sent men to die in Vietnam—you can't tell their families they died for nothing.
>
> But to save other men from dying, we have to admit that those who have died have not died for nothing, but to bring America to its senses.
>
> It's time to get out... not with saving of face but with saving of life, for their people and ours.

The primary emotion behind that editorial was incredulity. How could the peace movement be taking so long to stop the war?

I arrived in Washington in 1961. During most of the time since then, most of the people I have known here have been against any large-scale American air or ground involvement in Vietnam. I think the same has been true of the country as a whole. Yet peace will have taken at least 11 years to attain. This failure of the anti-war movement has become a central preoccupation of *The Washington Monthly* as part of our general interest in why the right things don't get done in government.

In an early article on the subject, "The Politics of Peace," author Sam Brown pointed out that the primary tactic of the peace movement—the mass demonstration, with its inevitable fringe of violence—was uniquely suited to turning off large segments of the potential anti-war constituency. He also noted in the April, 1970, article:

> Through the entire history of the peace politics congressional doves had very seldom spent a full day's effort on the war. They gave speeches on occasion. But within the Senate there was no organization, no regular meetings, no commitment to get together and sublimate their egos to produce a piece of legislation, no serious intention to debate on the floor of the Congress, no effort to raise money to use television in response to the President. This was particularly galling right after the Carswell vote in April, [1970,] when these same Senators had come from nowhere to beat him with hard work and internal organization.

John Rothchild, in a later article on "The Senate's Lame Doves," described the legislators' reluctance to vote against defense appropriations:

> There is that vision of a battlefield with a few brave, young Americans surrounded by a closing knot of North Vietnamese, while a credit adjustor slips through the enemy lines to repossess our guns and declares "Senator X wouldn't pay for these. . . . "

The Senators have shown a bit more spine recently, but over and over again as we have looked at why the peace movement failed, at why those good things haven't happened in government, it boils down, in Suzannah Lessard's words, "to cowardice where courage is needed, people entrenched in their bureaucracies afraid to risk their security for the very purpose they supposedly hold their jobs."

So, as we put together this fourth anniversary supplement, we decided we wanted to emphasize our exploration of the theme of cowardice and fear. Fear not only of losing one's job, but of losing the special privileges and exemptions—the tax breaks and the draft deferments—that seem to distinguish the governors from the governed. Fear of losing the status, the identity of General Motors executive, Air Force officer, or White House staff member.

The price of our failure to overcome these fears is not just something vague, such as bad government or poor public administration. It is terrible things happening to specific human beings. That is why we close this group of excerpts and articles with "The Burn Ward." ■

The Editor

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I do not contend that the true path to good government lies in everyone's threatening to resign publicly, although I am convinced that there should have been more such resignations in recent years. What I do contend is that this government needs more men who are psychologically ready to resign—who, when vital issues are at stake will stand up to their superiors and fight to the point of losing their jobs. Of all the wrong decisions I have seen made in government, wrong ideas and information have played no greater role than the failure of men with the right ideas and information to press their case courageously.
—from "More on Courage and Cowardice" by Charles Peters in the August, 1969, issue of *The Washington Monthly.*

■In 1966, when the commitment of American ground forces in Vietnam took its greatest leap forward, criticism of U. S. policy became widespread among Foreign Service Officers, or at least among those stationed in Washington. A number of young officers, some of whom had been expressing their misgivings in private conversation, were called together at the State Department for a briefing before setting out on campus recruiting trips. One of them asked the recruitment director what they should say to students who were interested in the Foreign Service but had qualms about the American role in Vietnam. The answer—in no uncertain terms—was that there was no place in the Foreign Service for persons who do not support this war. No one spoke.

■At the beginning of the Dominican rebellion in 1965, U. S. Ambassador W. Tapley Bennett declined a request to moderate the rapidly growing dispute at a time when moderate leftists were still in control of the "constitutionalist" forces. Bennett's predecessor, John Bartlow Martin, states in his book, *Overtaken by Events,* that Bennett, having missed this chance at conciliation, probably had little choice but to bring in the Marines.

The book fails to relate, however, a scene in which Bennett summoned a large portion of his staff and told them that he was planning to call for help. After briefly describing the situation as he saw it, Bennett made it clear that U. S. military forces, if summoned, would be ordered to thwart the attempted revolution, not just "protect U. S. lives and property." He then asked his staff if there were any alternate views or proposals. No one spoke.

■When John Bowling, a stimulating lecturer at State's Foreign Service Institute, suggested that flag desecrators were philosophically identical to the bomb-throwing anarchists of previous decades and that draft resisters were unmanly and cowardly, not one of the Foreign Service Officers in his audience challenged the statement, despite Bowling's invitation to do so. After several moments of silence, Bowling himself finally felt constrained to express the other side of both positions.

If such examples lead to doubt as to whether Foreign Service Officers are capable of speaking out in a group

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situation, even when there is a clear invitation to do so, one can easily imagine the prevailing timidity in one-to-one conversations where there is a disparity in rank or bureaucratic authority. FSOs may proudly relate the vehemence with which they have rebuffed officers of other agencies—notably USIA and AID—but direct argument with one's superiors in State is not a generally accepted mode of conduct. Former Undersecretary of State George Ball enjoyed a reputation as a courageous devil's advocate on the subject of Vietnam, but anyone who opposed Ball's hard line vis-a-vis General de Gaulle had to be wary of the consequences. At least one senior officer with the temerity to play devil's advocate on this issue received word that the Undersecretary no longer desired to share the same room with him during policy discussions. ■

From "The Cost of Cowardice: Silence in the Foreign Service" by William Bell in the July, 1969, issue of The Washington Monthly.

Patrick J. McGarvey

Intelligence to Please

From 1964-65, when U. S. involvement in Vietnam began to be considerable, until late 1966 or early 1967, the generals in Saigon worked to build up U. S. troop strength. Therefore, they wanted every bit of evidence brought to the fore that could show that infiltration was increasing. The Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) obliged and also emphasized in all reports the enemy's capability to recruit forces from the South Vietnamese population. In 1967 a second period began. The high priests of Saigon decided that we were "winning." Then the paramount interest became to show the enemy's reduced capability to recruit and a slowdown in infiltration due to our bombing. The tune and emphasis of reports from the field changed radically, and so did those put out by DIA.

It should not be concluded that any one person suppressed evidence. No one did. The military in Saigon sent all the facts back to Washington eventually. During the build-up period, infiltration data and recruitment data came in via General Westmoreland's daily cablegram. Data from field contact with enemy units came amid the more mundane cables or by courier up to five weeks later. Cables from Westmoreland, of course, were given higher priority in Washington. When we started "winning," detailed reports highlighting "body counts" and statistics on how many villages were pacified were cabled with Westmoreland's signature; recruitment studies were pouched or cabled with the reports on the fluctuating price of rice. It was all

Adapted from an article in the July, 1970, issue of The Washington Monthly.

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a matter of emphasis.

During all this time DIA was thoroughly enmeshed in the numbers game. It paid little or no attention to what Hanoi was saying on the radio, discounting it as propaganda. It made little effort to perceive the enemy's view of the war. It made little effort to reason out what the enemy's strategy was, why he believed he was winning, what he was saying publicly about how he was going to fight the war, or how the bombing was affecting his morale. It was too busy keeping up with the flow of numbers from Saigon.

Find Us a Target

As the air campaign crept northward, the Operations people on the Joint Staff wanted bigger and better targets. They didn't ask the intelligence people what was worth hitting or what a rational plan of attack might be. On the contrary, they demanded targets that a certain weapons system could attack. They had a TV-guided missile, and they wanted to use it. "Pick out a building for us to hit," they'd say. DIA could have told the JCS this was the wrong approach, but it played the game. It sent photo-interpreters scurrying to their scanners to find, say, a two- or three-story building in an area open to U. S. raids. If they saw no signs of military activity around the building they would dub it a "possible military storage area," a description that gave Intelligence the right to go hunting.

The Operations staff's biggest hangup was over the prohibition on bombing the port of Haiphong. It refused to accept the judgment of the CIA that bombing the port wouldn't stop the flow of goods into North Vietnam. It refused to accept that the North Vietnamese man-packed arms across the Chinese border and imported little by sea. DIA, bowing to the pressure, came up with a list of several hundred small, insignificant targets in and near Haiphong, listing them as crucial and suggesting that the cumulative effect of hitting all 200 or more barge and ferry landings, rail spurs, bridges, and road intersections would be the same as flattening Haiphong—again a triumph for the art of compromise and no doubt small comfort to the pilots shot down in that heavily defended area.

Well before the Tet Offensive of January, 1968, when the enemy build-up at Khe Sanh first became obvious, two DIA analysts who had been studying enemy tactics and strategy for four years sat down and wrote a

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paper that concluded that the enemy was planning a feint at Khe Sanh. They based this judgment on their interpretation of General Giap's fighting methods over the past two years. They outlined a likely enemy course of action designed to draw American forces to the Khe Sanh area so that the populous coastal plains would be left thinly defended and concluded that perhaps it would be unwise to react to the Khe Sanh build-up. They presented the findings of their paper at a briefing, much to the amusement of all present. They suggested that the paper be cabled to Saigon as a DIA assessment of the situation and that the JCS be given the benefit of their thoughts. This, too, caused merriment among the assembled. "How could you possibly know more than General Westmoreland?" they were asked. Their boss, an Army colonel, finally got angry at their persistence and taped the paper to the wall beside his desk, claiming that the analysts had just stuck their professional reputations on the line and adding he hoped they were wrong. The paper hung there until late in March, 1968, after the Tet Offensive, which occurred largely on the coastal plain, and after the enemy ended the siege of Khe Sanh without ever assaulting it. Then it was taken down quietly. The Colonel never mentioned the subject again. The JCS was never given a copy, and it was never cabled to Saigon.

Backdoor Pressure

The pressures on DIA to conform to the views of the military are hard to resist. Take a mechanism known as the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), which is supposed to represent the best judgment of the intelligence community on a particular issue and is used by the President and his Cabinet in formulating policy. Everyone in the intelligence business has a chance to assert his point of view in these estimates, and it is here that DIA's role is crucial. DIA is well aware that many service judgments are biased and don't reflect reality. Its obligation, in those cases, is to assume its responsibility as arbiter among the services and establish a Defense position on the issue, and it works hard at doing just that. But strong pressures usually come in through the back door.

For one thing, there is something called the "Eyes Only" cable that is sent "back channel" and is severely restricted in dissemination. Usually no more than five people see it. I have seen "Eyes Only" cables come in from the U. S. Commanders in Honolulu and Saigon to the Director of DIA requesting that he give more than a passing consideration to the command viewpoint about this or that. The language is always moving. Such a cable is likely to start off complimenting the recipient for the fine job he is doing and then work in high-sounding phrases which evoke motherhood, apple pie, the American flag, and, of course, the uniform. It then implies that the sender would like to see a particular judgment or set of figures changed to conform to the command view. It rarely offers any evidence to support this request. It is sure to close with a veiled threat that the recipient's career is in jeopardy if he doesn't play the game and "get on the team." Many estimates have been changed or reworded because of an "Eyes Only" cable from a field commander. In one instance the Air Force Chief of Intelligence called my boss at DIA about a nearly completed estimate on U. S. bombing in Laos. He told him that he was sending a team down to change the wording of the estimate and that my boss had better remember what color his uniform was. Of course it was the same as the General's—blue. The team arrived, and, over the protests of the DIA analysts, a compromise was reached.

The classic example of command influence on intelligence matters occurred just after the Tet Offensive in January, 1968. In the early weeks of February the JCS insisted that the offensive was total military defeat for

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the enemy—General Westmoreland told them so in his daily cables. DIA didn't agree with this interpretation, but it watered down every paper it wrote on this subject so that its position was impossible to determine. Then General Wheeler went to Saigon and came back with Westmoreland's request for 206,000 troops to "clean up" the "defeated" enemy. Suddenly it was legitimate to say that the Tet Offensive had really "set us back." Everybody on the service staffs, with DIA leading the pack, started writing gloomy estimates with unaccustomed forthrightness and clarity.

Wave-Makers Always Sink

Everyone connected with DIA is partially at fault for the agency's shortcomings. This includes the military who run it, the civilians who staff it, the Secretary of Defense, the JCS, and the individual service staffs. As far as the military men who manage the agency are concerned, their guilt or incompetence results simply from the fact that they are uniformed men with a parent service. Imagine, if you will, what the prospect of a tour with DIA looks like to a military officer. He knows or soon learns that he will be thrust into a position in which, on occasion, his professional judgment will vary markedly from that of his parent service. He will be expected to defend a position that could enrage his chief of staff—but officers who do so more than once get known fast and are accorded an appropriate "reward" at a later date in terms of promotion and assignment. Consider also that a tour at DIA—normally two to three years—is very short when compared to a 20- to 30-year military career. And so most officers assigned to DIA go through a predictable pattern. They come on board as "hard-chargers," ready to set the world on fire. They stick to their principles through one or two scrapes. Then they become a little more circumspect, letting individual issues slide by and rationalizing that it wasn't a crunch question anyway. Finally, they resign themselves to "sweating out" their tours and playing every situation by ear. They avoid committing themselves or making decisions. They refuse to tackle the agency's long-term organizational ills because doing so would make too many waves.

The shortness of the tours of duty of the military managers of the agency (about nine-tenths of management jobs are filled by military officers) causes some long-term problems. These officers are interested largely in getting good performance out of staff while they are there, not in building up long-run staff or agency capabilities. They want to impress the General, let him know that he's running a "crack-er-jack" outfit. The General, of course, is largely occupied with current problems, so his subordinates gear up to service his needs. This has resulted over the years in the reduction of DIA's long-term research capability to near zero. More than 95 per cent of the effort expended in DIA on Vietnam, for example, is on current problems. Long-term study groups have been disbanded and the staffs reassigned to the current problem area. Basic intelligence for detailed studies is simply not getting done or is whipped out with a weekend's furious overtime. The managers who choose to cut the long-term staff don't worry about the ultimate effect, because by the time it becomes evident they'll be off on other assignments.

Another problem is the "can do" attitude that prevails among the officer corps. It is unthinkable for an officer to tell his superior that he cannot complete a task. It is a form of heresy. Officers accept a requirement for four or six extra hours' work a day when they know their staff already puts in 12- or-14-hour days. Rarely, if ever, does anyone say no, or point out that certain jobs take time. "Yes sir, can do!" is all that is heard. The result is an attitude among DIA staff members that is captured in their motto, "If you want it real bad, you're gonna get it real bad." ■

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Russell Baker and Charles Peters

The Prince and His Courtiers: at the White House, the Kremlin, and the Reichschancellery

The analogy between the modern presidency and the royal European court, bewigged, bejeweled, and beset with intrigue, is not original with George Reedy, but he is the first to alarm us with notice that court government is undergoing a 20th-century rebirth in the White House. This renaissance of the princely court, Reedy insists, is breeding immense danger for American government, for much the same reason that the 17th and 18th-century courts of Western Europe contributed to the development of violent revolutions.

In both France and England, our immediate political forebears, kings lost their heads because they had become unable to sense or hear the intent and passion of their peoples through the barriers of courts erected to glorify and, ironically, to protect them. Reedy suggests that the presidency is in somewhat the same danger, and for essentially the same reasons.

The president, needing "access to reality" in order to govern effectively, too often has access, instead, only to a self-serving court of flunkeys, knights, earls, and dukes in business suits, whose best chances of advancing their separate fortunes usually lie in diverting reality before it can reach the President. The result is a dangerous presidential isolation, which may be compounded in its peril because court life works to persuade the President that he is more closely in touch with reality than anyone else in the realm.

Thus, we had those repeated assertions from Lyndon Johnson that only the President had all the facts on which to base decisions about Vietnam, when in truth he lacked the first fact that was most essential of all for a leader and easiest to learn outside the White House court: to wit, that his people were not behind him as he waded deeper and deeper into the quagmire. This isolation from reality kept Johnson, and has since kept Richard Nixon, obsessed with Southeast Asia as a prime problem of government at a time when very few people could sustain more than a flickering interest in it, and then only when aroused by White House theat-

Russell Baker writes the "Observer" column in The New York Times. *Charles Peters is editor of* The Washington Monthly.

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rics.

Reedy suggests that the presidency may be confronted, if not with the headsman or guillotinist, with an institutional arteriosclerosis no less fatal at a time when the interests of government seem increasingly alien to the interests of the governed.

When Reedy's book was first published, its importance as a work of political science was discounted by some reviewers on grounds that Reedy, as a member of the Johnson staff, had based his treatise on a singularly peculiar presidency, one in which parallels to the Sun King were ludicrously easy to draw.

Reedy's discussion of courtiers insulating the President against reality was taken by many readers as sour

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grapes, a subtle intellectual's way of taking his vengeance upon the cleverer players of the court game who had eased him into retirement. John Roche, who stayed with President Johnson's staff to the end, refers with mild contempt to the notion that presidential staff aides can seriously be likened to royal courtiers.

Members of the Kennedy circle—that strange, apparently indissoluble court in search of a king—contend that Johnson was, of course, susceptible to royal isolation by slick courtiers. But not their man, not Jack. The court analogy had no validity when applied to a President of superior competence.

And yet. . . . And yet. . . .

There were signs, not altogether superficial, that the development of something remarkably like court life had been rapidly accelerating at the White House since the arrival of Franklin Roosevelt. With Roosevelt, the presidency—for reasons not too difficult to understand in an era that was dotting the rest of the earth with strutting Caesars—entered a period of apotheosis. There had been strong presidents before, but now we were embarked on the time of the strong presidency, a time which is still with us.

The Trappings of the Court

In sheer body density alone, the insulation around the presidency has thickened rapidly. Herbert Hoover had a staff of only 42 persons. A generation later, General Eisenhower, who prided himself on taut administration, had more than 2,000. Under Kennedy and Johnson, foreign-policy management groups were moved into the White House, and institutional divisions between domestic- and foreign-policy barons began to develop. In the Nixon White House, an expanding foreign-policy dukedom has been established under Henry Kissinger with a staff of his own moving in independent orbit around Kissinger, who simultaneously maintains a great-lord's orbit around the President in the larger White House universe.

The trappings of court began, simultaneously, to multiply. The custom-built carriages, magnificently engineered automobiles built expressly for the White House. Great ocean-spanning jets kept constantly at the ready. Special helicopters. Presidential appearances were preceded and surrounded by the inevitable, ineffectual showing of the private presidential bodyguard. Security at the White House thickened. First, there were the gates through which ordinary mortals might not step. Inside, the lobbies swarmed with hangers-on, most especially the press, waiting for some emanation to filter out from the ruler burrowed deep behind offices occupied by gentlemen of ascending importance. The elite might have entree to the Oval Room, equivalent to the Royal Bedchamber. For the sub-elite there were certain Presence Chambers where the Presidential Magnificence might be seen in the flesh, might indeed grant the boon of a smile, of a casual "Hi, there!" to the fortunate. And there was the White House Mess, where the etiquette of who might eat at what table was of an intricacy that would surely have bemused Louis XIV.

American fears of monarchy at the head of government are familiar to schoolboys—the debate at the beginning about how the leader of the new country should be styled, the fears of the more republican founders that the President might develop into a king and that the seat of government might develop into a court.

These fears survived from memories of the abuses of the 17th and 18th centuries, at which people and Parliament were frequently dealt with according to the advice of some royal favorite, whose grasp of statecraft ended with a mastery of sycophancy. The most notoriously inept of the courtiers whimsically given power by kings was perhaps the Duke of Buckingham, who seems to have bewitched King James I with his male

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beauty and skills at flattery and royal companionship. Buckingham survived James to continue incompetent government into the reign of King Charles I. When Buckingham was eventually murdered, all England lit bonfires to honor his murderer. The experience of such government, repeated in differing degrees in the reigns of Charles II and James II and later under the Hanovers, was part of the intellectual heritage of the men who founded the Republic. Hence, the distaste for courts.

Reedy's thesis holds that the time the Founders feared may have arrived at last, unnoted under all the mock-serious political uproar about kings, tyrants, and courtiers that has been part of the currency of political campaigning throughout American history. Reedy, in fact, gives us a full-length portrait of the courtier's life at the modern presidential court.

And what is a courtier's life like at the White House? Why, surprising to tell, not terribly different from court life at the Reichschancellery in the reign of Adolf Hitler, where a courtier's life was surprisingly like life in the Kremlin, at the court of Josef Stalin.

Servility Become Endemic

By an extraordinary publishing coincidence, Reedy's memoir appeared in the same year that Albert Speer and Nikita Khruschev gave us their memoirs of life at the top in Germany and Russia.* Neither the Speer nor Khruschev book concerns itself consciously with court life under Hitler or Stalin, yet, when they are read in context with Reedy, we are startled to discover that the styles of government being described by all three are remarkably alike.

At each court, for example, we find the leader, or prince, treated with a deference approaching reverence, which must inevitably tempt all but the humblest souls (who are rarely to be found running large, aggressive states) to assume they possess a superiority bordering on divinity. In time, the man treated with such distinction begins to expect it as his due. The sycophantic Buckingham repeatedly signed his notes to the king, "your faithful slave and dog," and James seems never to have told him that a friend's groveling was embarrassing to the king. Jack Valenti, who knew his man as well as anyone in Washington, knew that Lyndon Johnson would not bridle if Valenti told the world he slept better for knowing Johnson was in the White House. Princes, whether monarchist, fascist, communist, or democratic, become accustomed to feeling like very special people.

Reedy writes of the White House:

> There is built into the presidency a series of devices that tend to remove the occupant of the Oval Room from all of the forces which require most men to rub up against the hard facts of life on a daily basis. The life of the White House is the life of a court. It is a structure designed for one purpose and one purpose only—to serve the material needs and the desires of a single man. . . .
>
> He is treated with all the reverence due a monarch. No one interrupts presidential contemplation for anything less than a major catastrophe somewhere on the globe. No one speaks to him unless spoken to first. No one ever invites him to "go soak your head" when his demands become petulant and unreasonable.

Speer found a similar condition under Hitler. He writes:

> There is a special trap for every holder of power. . . . His favor is so desirable to his subordinates that they will sue for it by every means possible. Servility becomes endemic among his entourage, who compete among themselves in their show of devotion. This exercises a sway over the ruler who becomes corrupted in turn.

And in Moscow, at about the same time Speer and colleagues were competing to persuade the Fuehrer of his surpassing excellence. Khruschev and comrades in Moscow were busily

**The Twilight of the Presidency* by George E. Reedy. World, $6.95. *Inside the Third Reich.* Albert Speer. Macmillan, $12.50. *Khruschev Remembers.* Translated and edited by Strobe Talbott. Little, Brown, $10.

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laboring to show Stalin that there was no duty more vital for them than humoring his whims. At the end of a brutally exhausting day, Khruschev recalls:

> We would meet either in his study at the Kremlin or, more often, in the Kremlin movie theater. Stalin used to select the movies himself. . . . When a movie ended, Stalin would suggest, "Well, let's go get something to eat, why don't we?" By now it was usually one or two o'clock in the morning. It was time to go to bed. . . . But everyone would say, yes, he was hungry, too. This lie was like a reflex. We would all get into our cars and drive to the dacha.

Uncomfortable Truths

The prince, having become accustomed through the assurances of the courtiers to the sensation of being an extraordinary human being, becomes more difficult to deal with at certain times. One such time is the moment when an uncomfortable truth is delivered at the palace door. A courtier's first instinct is to protect the prince, and there are rationalizations for doing so in the unwritten court protocols, as Reedy notes:

> It is felt that this man is grappling with problems of such tremendous consequence that every effort must be made to relieve him of the irritations that vex the average citizen.

It vexes the average citizen, fully aware of his own incompetence, to be forced to dwell upon the fact that in life, things frequently don't work out. Imagine, then, the difficulty of having to confront a prince, conditioned to believe in his peculiarly excellent superiority, with the fact that his policy is failing. There must be many of Lyndon Johnson's dukes and earls who, remembering the Vietnam years, would find it possible to sympathize with Hermann Goering's lines in an anecdote related by Speer.

About to board his train to leave Berlin, Goering was visited by General Adolf Galland. Goering took the occasion to reprimand Galland for having told Hitler that American fighter planes had penetrated German territory. Galland said they would soon be flying even deeper into Germany. "Fantasies!" Goering said. Galland said American fighters had already been shot down at Aachen. "Impossible!" said Goering. And yet, Galland insisted, the downed planes were at Aachen.

> Goering finally declared: "What must have happened is that they were shot down much farther to the west. I mean, if they were very high when they were shot down they could have glided quite a distance farther before they crashed."
>
> Not a muscle moved in Galland's face. "Glided to the east, sir? If my plane were shot up. . . ."
>
> "Now then, Herr Galland," Goering fulminated, trying to put an end to the debate, "I officially assert that the American fighter planes did not reach Aachen."
>
> The General ventured a last statement. "But, sir, they were there!"
>
> At this point Goering's self-control gave way. "I herewith give you an official order that they weren't there! Do you understand? The American fighters were not there! Get that! I intend to report that to the Fuehrer."

It can't happen here? After the Sontay raid failed to discover a single American prisoner of war, much less rescue one, Secretary of Defense Laird went to the White House. What was this? A failure? Not at all, Laird explained. It had been a triumph for American intelligence.

Communism occasionally has the bad news problem, too; and apparently deals with it just as fascists and democrats do.

Khruschev tells a story that had been told to him by Mikoyan. Demchenko, a member of the Ukranian Politburo, called on Mikoyan in Moscow.

> Here's what Demchenko said: "Anastas Ivanovich, does Comrade Stalin—for that matter, does anyone in the Politburo—know what's happening in the Ukraine? A train recently pulled into Kiev loaded with corpses of people who had starved to death. It had picked up corpses all the way from Poltava to Kiev. I think somebody had better inform Stalin about this situation."
>
> You can see what an abnormal state of affairs had developed when someone like

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Demchenko was afraid to go see Stalin himself.

Actually, according to the evidence of our three memoirists, it wasn't abnormal at all. Rather than disturb the prince by becoming the delivery agent for bad news, and thus perhaps lose favor, the courtier elects to withhold from him information essential to realistic policy decisions. Or, to put it more bluntly, his own interests are placed above the interests of the prince and the state he professes to serve.

Experienced courtsmen may find it naive that anyone should expect them to behave otherwise. The rationale has been finely worked out; it has been articulated many times by men explaining why they chose not to voice their dissent from the Johnson war policy. Open dissent ends one's chance to exercise his benign influence within the government, and creates job openings to be filled by less high-minded men. In brief, he who runs away shall live to run away another day.

The Keys to the Kingdom

Reedy, Khruschev, and Speer give us comparable pictures of the advancing corruption created in the courtiers by their impulse to establish and protect their intimacy with the leader.

The White House assistants, writes Reedy, constitute "the greatest of all barriers to presidential access to reality." For them:

> There is only one fixed goal in life. It is somehow to gain and maintain access to the President. This is a process which resembles nothing else known in the world except possibly the Japanese game of *go*, a contest in which there are very few fixed rules and the playing consists of laying down alternating counters in patterns that permit flexibility but seek to deny that flexibility to the opponent. The success of the player depends upon the whim of the President. Consequently, the President's psychology is studied minutely, and a working day in the White House is marked by innumerable probes to determine which routes to the Oval Room are open and which end in a blind alley.

This world sounds remarkably like the court of King James I, at which the Catholic faction, finding the King between favorites and knowing his weakness for handsome young men, kept thrusting a lovely young man of their choosing across the King's path, in hopes of obtaining the keys to the kingdom.

In Johnson's White House, the technique at least must have been rather duller. The basic method, Reedy reports, was "to be present either personally or by a proxy piece of paper when 'good news' arrives and to be certain that someone else is present when the news is bad."

Speer found precisely the same principle at work around Hitler. Writing of Martin Bormann, his *bete noire*, he states:

> Bormann followed the simple principle of always remaining in closest proximity to the source of all grace and favor. He accompanied Hitler to the Berghof and on trips, and in the Chancellery never left his side until Hitler went to bed in the early morning hours. . . .
>
> The powerful men under Hitler were already jealously watching one another like so many pretenders to the throne. Quite early there were struggles for position among Goebbels, Goering, Rosenberg, Ley, Himmler, Ribbentrop, and Hess. . . . But none of them recognized a threat in the shape of trusty Bormann. He had succeeded in representing himself as insignificant while imperceptibly building up his bastions.

"To be close to Stalin," Khruschev remembers, "this seemed to be the crowning moment of my career."

And elsewhere, "I believed that everything Stalin said in the name of the party was inspired by genius, and that I had only to apply it to my own life." As this comment suggests, the courtier may, at some early stage in the relationship, develop such a psychological identity with his particular prince that he will abandon his own judgment and, like a lover, submerge his identity in that of the prince. The sweet delirium of ecstasy is produced when the prince returns the worship with some small gesture of recognition.

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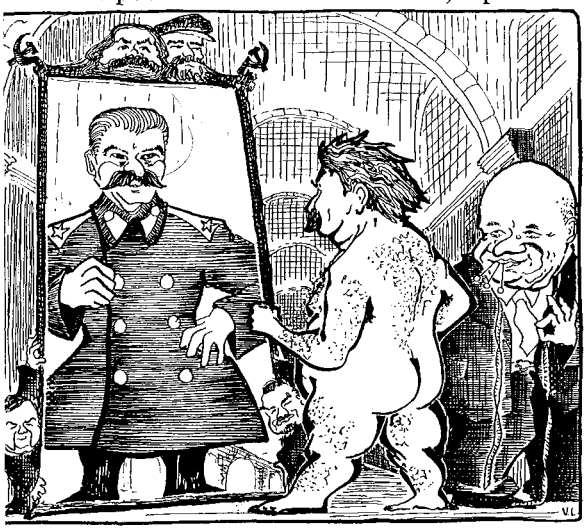
"For me to speak with the idol of a nation, " writes Speer, "to discuss building plans with him, sit beside him in the theater, or eat ravioli with him in the Osteria" was simply "overwhelming."

"Now I was completely under Hitler's spell, unreservedly and unthinkingly held by him. I was ready to follow him anywhere."

On occasion, when Speer would greet Hitler with, "Heil, Mein Fuehrer!" Hitler would reply with, "Heil, Speer!" At such moments, Speer re-



calls, he felt "as if a medal had been conferred upon me. . . . All the intrigues and struggles for power were directed toward eliciting such a word, or what it stood for."

Yes, Mr. President, I Agree.

Receiving the recognition and approval of the leader becomes a pleasure so powerful that the strongest of courtiers find it difficult to deny themselves. The empty-headed thrills which the younger Khruschev and Speer derived from the notice of their leaders may be dismissed as the natural response of innocence in the presence of a celebrity. But what are we to make of the account of a National Security Council meeting under Lyndon Johnson, as recounted by Chester Cooper in *The Lost Crusade*? Cooper writes:

The President, in due course, would announce his decision and then poll everyone in the room—Council members, their assistants, and members of the White House and NSC staffs. "Mr. Secretary, do you agree with the decision?" "Yes, Mr. President." "Mr. X, do you agree?" "I agree, Mr. President." During the process I would frequently fall into a Walter Mitty-like fantasy: When my turn came I would rise to my feet slowly, look around the room and then directly at the President, and say very quietly and emphatically, "Mr. President, gentlemen, I most definitely do *not* agree." But I was removed from my trance when I heard the President's voice saying, "Mr. Cooper, do you agree?" And out would come a "Yes, Mr. President, I agree."

The courtier's need to please his leader often has disastrous consequences for the people on the other end of royal decisions. When the Russians surrounded Hitler's Sixth Army at Stalingrad, at a critical moment in World War II, a black reality began to threaten the Fuehrer's notion that the Wehrmacht could not be defeated. At the timid suggestion of a general, he was even considering an effort to save the Army by breaking out into a retreat until Reichsmarshal Goering entered the room:

Depressed, with a beseeching note in his voice, Hitler asked him: "What about supplying Stalingrad by air?" Goering snapped to attention and declared solemnly: "My leader! I personally guarantee the supplying of Stalingrad by air. You can rely on that."

His delusion of invincibility thus restored, Hitler would hear no more talk of retreat. He ordered the Sixth Army to stay and fight it out in Stalingrad, where it slowly faced extinction when Goering's promise proved totally fabricated—as everyone on the General Staff knew it would. Finally, a group of generals persuaded Chief of Staff Keitel to recommend to Hitler an evacuation of the Army's helpless survivors. It was the only sane thing to do, and Keitel promised that he would. The courtier's instinct, however, overwhelmed him at the critical moment, as Speer recounts:

But at the situation conference, when Hitler once again stressed the necessity of

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holding out in Stalingrad, Keitel strode emotionally toward him, pointed to the map, where a small remnant of the city was surrounded by thick red rings, and declared: "Mein Fuehrer, we will hold that!"

It is enough to make one sympathize with a tyrant, for the determination of his courtiers to deceive him for their own personal ends—if he is aware of it—confronts him with problems as baffling as those posed by an enemy state's diplomacy.

Rarely is combat among the courtiers pursued to much political purpose in these 20th-century courts. Old scores are settled. There is intrigue, jealousy. One may win prerogatives that can be gloated upon. There is the satisfaction of public recognition, of being written about with awe in the press, and other small chaff. On great issues, however, the court is rarely a court in the Elizabethan sense, but rather more like that self-applauding cheering section which modern American politicians like to call a "team." Members are permitted to work out personal rivalries behind the arras, but on issues of substance every man must shape up, and work with the team.

With court struggle fought out along petty personal lines, the courtiers are inevitably reduced to demeaning little maneuvers to protect their backs, while working into good knife position vis-a-vis their immediate opponents.

Bormann, Speer recalls, avoided long business trips and vacations for fear another would insinuate himself during the absence into Bormann's place. "The man with the hedge clippers," Speer calls Bormann. "He was forever using all his energy, cunning and brutality to prevent anyone from rising above a certain level."

Speer himself was not without skill at the struggle. Hitler often explained the elimination of important men on grounds that they were in ill health. Politicians, therefore, "pricked up their ears" when they heard of Hitler's associates being "sick." And so, to keep his profile discreetly low, Speer, even when he became "really sick," deemed it "advisable to remain as active as possible."

Khruschev, referring to personal competition for favor in the Kremlin, describes Stalin's men as "tearing at each other's throats." Indeed, as his version of the Beria story reveals, Khruschev himself, by the time of Stalin's death, had become superbly adept at tearing throats.

"The life of a courtier," Reedy comments, "is to be Sammy Glick or to fight Sammy Glick."

Kennedy and O'Donnell

This composite portrait of the new courts which seem to flourish around great political power in our century explains a great deal about why things go wrong in modern governments. The court imbues the prince with both religious and nationalistic characteristics that make him a figure of awe. ("I support the President," Americans will say, on most issues in which they have no immediate financial or blood interest. It is closely akin to saying, "I support the flag.")

The courtiers tend to identify the prince with the state. ("What is good for Josef Stalin is good for the Soviet Union," to paraphrase the young Khruschev in American.) To help the state, the courtier must reach a position of intimacy with the prince, and to do this he must block or eliminate other courtiers moving toward the same goal. Above all, he must please the prince. And a prince who has been conditioned to consider himself a quasi-divine blend of flag, cause, and country is most unlikely to be pleased at being exposed too frequently to reality.

The danger becomes obvious, and Reedy has stated it. Our leaders, whatever their ideology, may very possibly be out of touch with the world that the rest of us live in. That hostile grille fence which keeps us away from the White House has two sides. The other seals off the President from the country he thinks he is governing.

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As all this suggests, the courtier-prince relationship is almost inevitably corrupting to both parties. Consider the relationship of John Kennedy and one of his finest courtiers, Kenneth O'Donnell. In his memoirs published in 1970 in *Life*, O'Donnell stated that Kennedy planned in 1963 to end the Vietnam war in 1965, after his reelection had been assured. O'Donnell, with his courtier's tendency to identify prince with state and place the welfare of ruler above all, saw nothing morally wrong, and to this day apparently fails to see anything out of order, with Kennedy's willingness to let men continue dying through 1963 and 1964 because it was politically awkward to end the war before assuring his own reelection.

What motivates the courtier? Money has something to do with it. Throughout history, the non-rich have tended to seek the patronage and protection of the rich. But money is far from the whole story. Another factor is the need to function, the opportunity the courtier gets to use his talents, to prove his mastery of special skills. Men wielding the pen or the brush naturally gravitate to the castle. Italian artists, for example, were given liberal use of church walls and domes to turn their talents to issues of ethereal importance in return for ignoring the rapacity and decadence of the princes who gave them their chance. Likewise, Albert Speer was able to blur away Hitler's final solution for the Jews as he focused on his own job performance. "I often ask myself what I would have done if I had recognized Hitler's real face and the true nature of the regime he had established," Speer said. "The answer was . . . my position as Hitler's architect had become indispensable. . . . I was in accord with the system so long as it permitted me to function effectively."

But the need to function is not the whole story, either. Note that Speer did not say "my position as architect," but rather, "my position as *Hitler's* architect" (our emphasis). This is finally what is most depressing of all: the compulsion of men to seek their identities in the gaudier identity of someone they perceive to be greater than they. It is the religious impulse perverted so that one's allegiance is to LBJ rather than to an idea of what the President should be.

The Prince-Substitute

Of course, most of us do not have a real prince to have faith in. We have evolved something like a prince-substitute, however, in the governmental and corporate bureaucracies, the universities, organized labor, foundations, with which so many of us are so unhappily familiar. Here we see working most of the same principles which animate life at the great political courts. Speer's willingness to overlook Hitler's mass murders as irrelevant to his specialty is similar to Khrushchev's position on Stalin's purges, as Khrushchev recalls:

> A list was put together of the people who should be exiled from the city. I don't know where these people were sent. I never asked. If you weren't told something, that meant it didn't concern you.

And although these examples are perhaps more dramatic, the attitudes are identical to those of today's corporate specialist—say the advertising men at General Motors, who didn't feel responsible for the unsafe cars produced

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by their company. Modern institutions remind us in other ways of the courts—the elevation of the organization to suprahuman importance, the minuet of the courtiers, the increasing difficulty of perceiving reality.

The universities, for example, are still puzzled about "what the kids really want." AT&T is still trying to figure out why it didn't anticipate a rising demand for phone service in New York. Penn Central executives are still amazed that there was no one around the office who knew how to run a railroad. The unions are irritated because blacks excluded from jobs by union policy accuse them of racism. And so on, and on, and on. The organization man has already become the characteristic man of our time, the man who shapes our destiny after the princes have finished reciting their ghost-written (by organization men) speeches.

A prophetic article in *The Observer* of London, written about Speer in 1944, is worth recalling, for what it says about our own time.

> Speer is, in a sense, more important for Germany today than Hitler, Himmler, Goering, Goebbels, or the generals. They all have, in a way, become the mere auxiliaries of the man who actually directs the giant power machine—charged with drawing from it the maximum effort under maximum strain. . . . In him is the very epitome of the "managerial revolution."
>
> Speer is not one of the flamboyant and picturesque Nazis. Whether he has any other than conventional political opinions at all is unknown. He might have joined any other political party which gave him a job and a career. He is very much the successful average man, well dressed, civil, noncorrupt, very middle class in his style of life, with a wife and six children. . . . [He] symbolizes a type which is becoming increasingly important in all belligerent countries: the pure technician, the classless bright young man without background, with no other original aim than to make his way in the world and no other means than his technical and managerial ability. It is the lack of psychological and spiritual ballast and the ease with which he handles the terrifying technical and organizational machinery of our age, which makes this slight type go extremely far nowadays . . . . This is their age; the Hitlers and Himmlers we may get rid of, but the Speers, whatever happens to this particular special man, will long be with us.

And so they are, the new courtiers, rising at their most efficient to heights where they seem very close to becoming the organization, but never quite. One day, we are surprised that the organization has sloughed off one brilliant young man and found another immediately to replace him.

In a thousand conference rooms, where the smell of moral sterility is as strong as ether in a hospital corridor, the new courtiers do their minuet each day and the organizations slip further and further from reality.

> How many of us [Reedy asks] have sat without protest through meetings where glorified nonentities expounded profound platitudes in the non-thought and the "innovative" non-proposal? How many of us have writhed in secret agony while "dedicated" mediocrities have responded with the organization man's version of Alleluia: "That grabs me. Run it up the flagpole and I'll salute it"?
>
> These obscenities have become the condition of life in the modern world—in business, in labor, in liberal and conservative organizations, in publishing, in education, and even in our churches. And when they reach government, where decisions are life and death for hundreds of millions of people, they reach the ultimate of the intolerable. . . .
>
> Somehow this thing must be made human again. Somehow we must learn to govern our people from an office that is secular and not from a court that is sanctified. If our destruction comes, it will be because we placed our faith—our unquestioning faith—in institutions that were only brick and wood and in men who were only flesh and blood and this seems to be the condition of the last half of the twentieth century.

Speer's personal lament may already apply to thousands who have never dreamed of Nazism and serve as epitaph for generations to come. "Years later, in Spandau," he writes, "I read Ernst Cassirer's comment on the men who of their own accord threw away man's highest privilege: to be an autonomous person.

"Now I was one of them." ■

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MEMO of the Month

Each year our readers send us hundreds of these examples of the bureaucratic mind at its worst. We print one each month. This is one of our favorites.

WESTERN ELECTRIC

North Andover, Mass.

November 11, 1969

TO ALL DEPARTMENT CHIEFS

On November 18, 1969 the Company will observe its 100th anniversary. In honor of this occasion the first rest period for each shift will be extended to twenty minutes.

Prior to the first rest period each department will send one person, for each twenty-five employees in the department, to a pre-assigned cafeteria to pick up cake which will be distributed at rest period.

The plant will be divided in half, starting at the main lobby entrance and running straight down to the rear of the plant. Departments on the Lawrence side of this dividing line will pick up cake in the south cafeteria; those on the Haverhill side will pick up at the north cafeteria.

During the period from November 12, 1969 through November 17, 1969, departments will pick up tickets at the Public Relations Office for their employees. There will be two types of tickets; pink tickets for 25 pieces of cake and a yellow ticket for odd numbers.
Example: If a department has 80 employees (including supervisors) they will pick up three pink and one yellow ticket. The yellow will be marked five employees and signed by individual department chief.

Schedule and procedure to be followed on November 18, 1969 is:

SHIFT HOURS	CAKE PICK-UP TIME	REST PERIOD
7:00 to 3:30	8:00—9:00	9:20—9:40
8:00 to 4:45	9:00—10:00	10:00—10:20
Second Shift	4:45—5:20	5:20—5:40

Third Shift—All employees go to the south cafeteria from 1:30—1:50 A.M., where cake will be served.

In addition to the above, a commemorative book mark will be given to each employee on November 18, 1969. These will be distributed through your Assistant Manager's Office.

/s/ J. CONNERS —240

Copy to:
Large Staff
Section Chiefs

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Suzannah Lessard

America the Featherbedded

Although defense work by no means monopolizes employment in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, providing roughly 60,000 of 150,000 jobs in industry, it is the foundation on which the Long Island boom was launched, and the repercussions of massive layoffs by the defense-oriented companies have reached all areas of economic life. Architects, accountants, and delivery boys—even a priest—have been registered among the jobless by the Nassau Employment Task Force. Few small businesses have not felt the chill. Yet silence is the order of the day. Local officials are mum, the Defense Contract Administration acknowledges no crisis, much less responsibility, and the people themselves, the unemployed and those threatened with unemployment, are withdrawn and secretive. Behind the silence lurks the unacceptable suspicion that a fundamental American myth is finally tearing at the seams.

Ironically, many of the people who work in the defense industry went into their fields not because they were particularly attracted to the work but because they were led to believe that security was one of the sure rewards of those professions—for instance, that a country absorbed in the demanding work of progress would always have a thirst for engineers. The larger theorem behind this corollary was that in America, if you get an education—a white collar—and are reasonably industrious, there will always be a place for you. Consequently, for a believer there is a deep shame implicit in being unemployed. Despite the fact that the situation is far beyond the defense engineer's control, being out of work signifies that he is lazy or incompetent like the blacks and poor people who are screaming, in such an un-American manner, for free handouts instead of "striving." The layoffs have precipitated a collision of myth and reality which has left the victims speechless.

The myth has been out of joint with reality all along: the cautious white-collar, security-bound life in post-war America has little to do with

Adapted from an article in the March, 1971, issue of The Washington Monthly.

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rugged individualism, versatility, or even ambition, the classical traits which in the land of opportunity yield great rewards. The valiant struggle against adversity for wealth and honor typified by the Horatio Alger figures has become the valiant struggle for a piece of paper, a passport into the white-collar corporate world where conformity is the mark of respectability—the new honor—and where adversity, kept well at bay by untold buffers, is unmentionable. But the myth lives on. The engineer is likely to see himself as a person who has striven hard and succeeded in the classical American style, and he believes that anyone with gumption could do the same. Now that he is unemployed—undesirable—he feels ashamed, tainted, and helpless. The cruelest consequence is his helplessness. He knows only dependence—how to go to work every day, sit at a desk, and come home with a check, all under the protective aegis of a big company. Now the institutions for whom he has sacrificed so much of his individuality have discarded him with ease, and his virtues and accomplishments are unsaleable elsewhere. The myth mocks him. He feels used, duped, bewildered, and retreats into a schizoid silence. "Grumman lays off 3,000," report the newspapers, almost routinely, and the 3,000 disperse, eyes downcast, to their little houses on Longbow Drive and Crossbow Lane. Everyone is agreed. No one wants to talk about it.

Almost no one. Some people, as though finally unmuzzled by rejection, are singing out right from the middle of white-collar Middle America, like prophets in a wilderness calling the bluff. Keith Bose, engineer and technical writer with 25 years' experience, is one of the grass-roots iconoclasts. His basic thesis is that he and his compatriots have been cast aside so easily because they weren't doing anything of real value all along and hence have nothing to bargain with. "There is a creeping sensation of futility which follows the white-collar worker to his job these days. . . of being an expendable pawn. . . neither frugality nor industry will help us escape." The defense industry is notorious for padded staffs and superfluous activity, but it is hardly alone. When the recession hit, many strictly commercial companies laid off hundreds of people without hindering production, referring to these *people* as "corporate fat." "If Black America is crying for recognition," says Bose, "White America is praying that the myth of indispensability will endure . . . . If we appear uninterested in the politics of government, it is because we are consumed by the politics of keeping our job."

What angers Bose is the degradation implicit in being corporate fat, aggravated by the knowledge that it's impossible to speak out without forfeiting your security—since the work is useless, you are easily dispensed with, and since there is a surplus of workers, you are easily replaced. It is, in fact, difficult to admit this to yourself without forfeiting whatever fragments of dignity your ephemeral status has lent you.

Bose on profession: "Professional life for us, particularly in the military-industrial empires, became an exercise in trivia. . . characterized more by jargon than the discipline of honest technology. . . relieved only by the pleasures of split-level materialism . . . . A great majority of the actual skills required of the middle-class wage earner could be acquired in a few weeks or months of training. . . . At some point in our careers we became conscious that we had no profession at all, and we hungered for a secret jargon to protect us, as hippies devise secret words." Some cryptograms from *The New York Times*' help-wanted section:

Manpower Development Specialist
Production Traffic Analyst
Quality Assurance Supervisor
Logistics Control Engineer
Planning Analyst

Bose's main theme is the loss of

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"human bargaining power" in the white-collar empires. He uses the term in a literal economic sense as well as philosophically. The two levels are very close: When people are doing inflated, useless work it is very easy to appropriate their powers of self-determination. The tendency will be that they won't even question this loss of control, but even if they do, they won't have the bargaining power to challenge it. Once they are dispensable they are helpless in the "insecurity within security" strait jacket. This is a realization that seeds a deep unquenchable rebellion, rebellion against having had to put up with it and against being tossed away with it. "In the history of civilization, America has now added a new facet—the throw-away, pop-top culture. Among billions of tons of non-returnable bottles and saddening hulks of automobiles, we have now added the middle-class worker."

It's sad that people don't let the rebellion surface until they are out of the ball game, but it's there, unformed, nevertheless. People don't like being wasted. It's not good for them, and it makes them unhappy. No matter what their salary, they don't like being corporate fat, or bureaucratic excrescence, or credential padding. They can be paid off, and they will hide their outrage, their disappointment, and disillusionment from themselves as well as the outside world, but that doesn't make the situation any less corrosive. "The majority of the people in this process don't know that's happening to them," said an ex-engineer.

Clearly a mass revolt is not on the threshold. Apathy, mistrust, the absence of channels of communication and forums for ideas in most middle-class communities, shame, and indifference to others are powerful deterrents. It's questionable, too, whether people who have spent their whole lives in service to a myth would be capable of change. So far most of them have reacted to unemployment in catatonic privacy. The drive, if any, has been towards covering up. Many families go on as if nothing has happened, go on building the swimming pool, coasting on unemployment benefits and savings.

One man felt so ashamed of being laid off that he couldn't tell his wife, and for six months got up in the morning and drove off as though he were going to work. Others, in a desperate effort to preserve the status quo, break their necks taking jobs as cabbies and waiters, just so they can go on living in the $50,000 house, wearing new clothes, and paying for the '73 Pontiac. But then the real crunch hasn't come yet. People can still coast, can still pretend that everything will right itself. There is no telling what they will do if forced to the wall, whether there will be a lot of disappearing Daddies, or if, in the drastic atmosphere, ideas like Keith Bose's will ignite and either change a small but significant number of people's lives or catch on in a major way and wreak fundamental changes in the nation's mythology.

To create more frou-frou jobs in an effort to swing the nation back to prosperity is to evade the challenge of the present crisis and only to aggravate the situation. The challenge is to redefine work. Work is effort directed towards the production or accomplishment of something useful. If the habit of thinking about work that way superceded the habit of responding to titles and monetary rewards, if education instead of gearing people up to getting a passport to high-paying, important-sounding niches developed an aversion to triviality as an affront to dignity, if the people in power looked at the working force as energy and talent to be applied to what needs to be done, it would become immediately apparent how wastefully fatuous the present system and projected policies are. The challenge is not to create a vacuous picture of prosperity. The challenge is to free the working force from the meshes of trivia and turn it towards the mountains of real work that needs to be done. ■

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Taylor Branch

We're All Working for the Penn Central

In the federal bureaucracy normality is a very depressing thing. It does strange things to men's minds. Listen:

I always had a tremendous sense of self-doubt—of thinking that if I ever really looked at what I was doing, square in the face, I would discover that none of it made a damn bit of difference. Even at my level, there was a lurking sense that the job was just feeding me well. I liked it for the excitement and power, but I couldn't really look at it, ever.

There was almost a constant drone of excitement. Somebody would come running into the office and shout, "The President wants this, so it's BIG!" And what does he want? He wants a statement saying how much he cares about the people in Appaloosa somewhere who got squelched by a hurricane. So we work frantically for several hours, expending hundreds of man-hours to figure out how many cows were killed and how many feet of highway were destroyed. Four or five other departments are working on the same statement. And the hurricane crisis at least is some kind of an emergency. Many of them aren't. That kind of thing happens 100 times a day.

It's sad. I was constantly troubled about the energy devoted to how things might look to the press and to jurisdictional squabbles and in-fighting. Many of our agencies were just tub-thumping around in search of a rationale.

Such is a view from the executive level, as the speaker is a former special assistant to several Cabinet members. But things are often similar in the ranks of the middle managers. George Beckerman, for example, is a GS-13 (base pay $19,700-$25,613) in the Department of Commerce:

We worry a lot. People worry about the stock market, the morning's automobile traffic, the government's multiple health insurance policies, and the fortunes of political friends elsewhere in Washington.

Some of the agencies really have to produce. They have a product that people can see, like air traffic controllers landing airplanes, or Social Security checks. But usually you spend at least 50 per cent of the time looking inward—making the agency a better place to work. We've been moving furniture around for more than two years. And you're always satisfying the information requests of other people in the agency, or evaluators. There are all kinds of evaluators—GAO auditors, Budget Bureau people, external contractors evaluating next year's appropriations request, interested staff members from the House Subcommittee on Economic Development, and so on.

No social problem has ever been solved this way. Time just passes them by—people forget and give them to us. It's very frustrating.

There is a kind of vicious cycle of insecurity at work in many parts of the Executive branch. A computer programmer for the Navy remarked that it was hard for him to review the past two years, during which he had been honestly engaged in "about three weeks" of meaningful work. "Despite yourself, you begin to lose confidence in your ability to get anywhere on the outside," he sighed, "and so you value that niche a little more. So you stay, and your confidence erodes further. The world loses more of its color, and the longer you stay, the more you need to stay even longer."

"And you begin to build an inner

Adapted from an article in the November, 1970, issue of The Washington Monthly.

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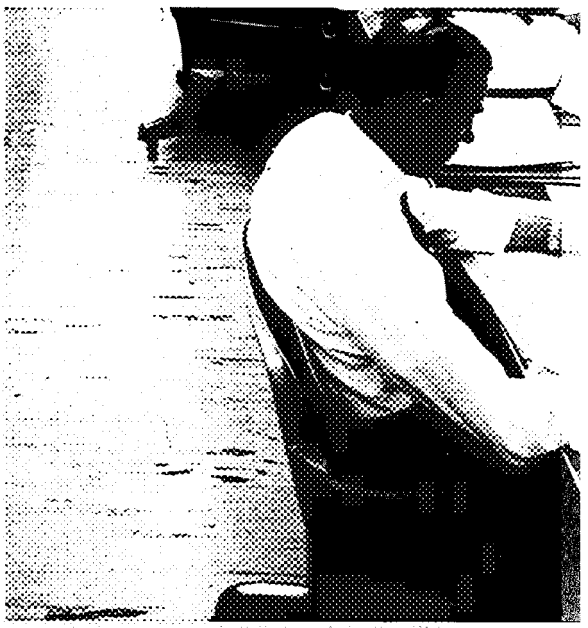
value system around the office activities alone," said a senior official of the Civil Service Commission. "Can you give a better conference or sound better in a staff meeting than old George? How do you come off in the internal battles for signs of significance—promotions, parking places, and publications? These concerns can ride right over the long lunches and the endless hours of sitting and talking."

The personal insecurity of many civil servants is paradoxical in view of the strong job protection provisions of the Civil Service laws. Once a federal employee obtains tenure, after three years, his employment is safe, barring egregious incompetence or criminal activities. His promotions are in question, as are his prestige and his particular job, but his salary, at least, is nearly guaranteed, especially if he knows the rules. And yet so many civil servants *feel* insecure. "There is a fantastic effort to keep criticism off the record," said Andrew Bennett of his 10 years in the Departments of Labor and Commerce. "You can't admit error. It's just not done. You can't ever talk freely about what you really do—that would be a direct threat to the agency's appropriations and to everybody there. And you can't really have your name on anything controversial."

Part of the celebrated bureaucratic caution comes from ambition, of course. Promotions contain a large measure of social acceptability, and people don't build esteem by criticizing their own guild. Part of it comes from the knowledge that the government has become a fairly lucrative place to work. Only about 5,800 federal employees have achieved the coveted "supergrade" (GS-16-18) status, which carries a base pay of $31,203 to $41,734. However, 40 per cent of the regular civil service employees fall into grade levels which have some managerial or policy functions (GS-9-15), and which draw base salaries of $11,614 to $34,971. This kind of money is enough to lure most people into pure caution, even in a tenure system. The temptation is compounded by the expected trend in public sector wages. Washington is now committed by law to the comparability principle—automatic increases equal to private sector productivity gains in comparable jobs—although no one has dared define productivity in government or to argue enthusiastically that business managers and government managers have the same motives. State and local governments must follow the federal pay scales; and public employees possess enough political power to keep the trend on the track. Sixteen million people are directly employed by federal, state, and local governments in



the United States, out of a total employment of about 85 million jobs. Moreover, the number of people indirectly paid by government has never been calculated—all the people (and towns) building missiles, highways, tanks, schools, space equipment, and all those in management-consultant firms. No one has ever counted heads in the consulting firms which ring Washington and most major cities, and which have made a deal with governments to exchange white paper for green. Some federal agencies contract

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almost everything out—the Atomic Energy Commission even contracted out the administration of the city of Oak Ridge. All these direct and indirect employees of the governments have a high-energy interest in raising public spending and salaries. It has been said that the bureaucracy and its dependents may do what capitalists always feared from the poor in democracy: they may vote in a sneaky socialism—for the middle class only.

In any case, the money and the opportunity are worth all the caution for most people. They are worth going along for. And there is also the fear of being ostracized into one of the more meaningless non-jobs. There are many people in government who could say, as did one candid GS-14 in the Veterans Administration, "I don't have much to do. I've been reorganized into a corner. I think I'll do some writing." And no doubt much insecurity seeps into the gray cubicles, because the inhabitants, like all of us, subconsciously expect to be flushed out into public scrutiny. "There are not many people at all who do nothing," observed an assistant secretary of a large department. "In fact, most people here are terribly busy. But there are a lot of people who do nothing useful." There are just a lot of people, that's all—clipping their vowels, clearing their throats, and above all, being careful.

Idler Gears

The Executive branch of the federal government may be characterized as a vast purring machine of idler gears, vibrated by the echo of typewriters and tickled by the flow of money. There are also merely idler-gears within every department and certain entire idler agencies. The jurisdictional tangles and appropriations powers of Congress are especially critical to the survival of the latter.

Take highway safety agencies, for example. Harold Seidman, who spent 25 years observing the bureaucracy from the Bureau of the Budget, has written a book called *Politics, Position and Power*, in which he says that these bodies provide excellent examples of how Congress transfers its own overlapping powers and superfluities to the Executive branch.

When jurisdictional problems could not be resolved, the Congress in 1966 created two agencies—the National Highway Safety Agency and the National Traffic Agency—to administer the highway safety program. The President was authorized to designate a single individual to head both agencies. All that was gained by creating two agencies—where only one was needed—was to give two Senate committees a voice in the confirmation of the agency head.

Congressmen spring to the defense of all sorts of Executive curiosities as long as the inhabitants are friendly and cooperative in spending money in the right places. Members of the Commerce Committees can be counted on for support of the pitiable Business and Defense Services Administration in the Department of Commerce—about 2,000 people with excellent industry and congressional connections in a bureaucratic legacy of the Last War, surviving on the strength of those connections and the vital-sounding ring of their agency's title. Members of the Interior committees are programmed to protect the slightly embarrassing Bureau of Indian Affairs. After all, they have some say in who spends those funds where and in what way. And, without a great many defections, Southerners and other farm congressmen will rally behind Representative Jamie Whitten to protect the Agriculture Department, which, in an inspiring fulfillment of Parkinson's Law, doubled in size over the last 40 years while the number of farms has halved. (A corollary of Parkinson's Law states that an organization of 1,000 people or more is capable of generating a full workload for everyone internally, and therefore has no need of contact with the outside world: the Department of Agriculture employs about 125,000 people.) The Joint Committee on Atomic Energy will probably never grant the Atomic Energy Commis-

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sion's (AEC) own request to get rid of four of the five commissioners. Harold Seidman found that "the Atomic Energy Commission is probably the only commission in history whose members unanimously recommended their own abolition." But the Joint Committee will have none of it, because such a reduction would remove four confirmations. More importantly, the committee's bargaining position for favors and matters of high policy would deteriorate seriously if it had to face a single director of the AEC instead of a five-member commission with required unanimity. And so on.

Reorganization, of course, is one of the principal tools of bureaucracies themselves in dealing with criticism. If the heat is on, a department or agency should go through six months of shuffling the organizational charts and then hope the crisis has passed, as is usually the case. But most organizational struggles have little to do with economy or public criticism—involving, on the other hand, the classic battle over who shall rule. In most cases, the question is which people or which department shall rule over a particular idler-gear program and its budget.

Take the United States Travel Service, a Commerce Department program funded over the years at between $3.5 and $4.5 million. It is designed to attract foreigners, primarily Europeans, to vacation in the United States, and its employees have a good time plastering Europe with billboards, leaflets, and TV commercials. "We did a study of the Travel Service," said Fred Simpich, general counsel of the Commerce Department for the last year of the Johnson Administration, "which showed that it had a zero effect on the travel patterns of Europeans. If the European economy is good, they come to the United States. If not, they don't. But the study didn't matter. We still had a full-scale, six-month war over who should have the Travel Service. The fight involved Treasury, State, Interior, and Commerce, with the

we bring them all together

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White House as referee.

"None of us ever really asked whether we should have a Travel Service at all," Simpich mused. "You couldn't look at it that way. You had to say, 'I'm not going to let those jerks get this program.' "

"There must be hundreds of programs like the Travel Service that are just wheel-spinning," Simpich concluded. He won that battle for the Department of Commerce. And so on.

The Theory

There comes a point at which students of bureaucracy must look for general guidance in determining which departments are likely to contain the most idler-gear programs and which programs utilize the highest proportion of idler-gear people. Fortunately, administrative science has scored here with a number of frameworks with which to coordinate and effectively manage one's thinking on this weighty subject. In fact, there are four theories to deal precisely with the idler-gear location question.

The first is called the Life-Cycle Theory of Bureaucratic Ossification (LICTBOSS), which says that the proportion of idler-gears increases with the age of the organization. The theory is based on the observation that agencies never abolish anything and often innovate on their margins with additional people and money. So they grow slowly over time, whether or not the need for them keeps pace. In this sense, LICTBOSS is much like Parkinson's Law, although more refined and flexible. There is, for example, an absolute-size corollary, which holds that the effects of age can be mitigated significantly by holding the absolute size of the organization below 1,000 people. This modification helps explain the relative efficiency of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Council of Economic Advisers.

There is also a structural corollary, stating that any multi-headed organization is three times as likely to be crawling with idler-gears, *ceteribus paribus*, as a comparable single-headed agency. This bit of fine tuning may be plugged into LICTBOSS to predict that 80 per cent of the government's multi-headed independent agencies are useless. And you can safely calculate that 95 per cent of the multi-headed statutory advisory bodies are duly-constituted governmental warts. Harold Seidman provides the following partial list of those with majority private membership:

National Insurance Advisory Board, Flood Insurance Advisory Committee, National Advisory Commission on Low-Income Housing, Advisory Board of St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, National Historical Publications Commission, Advisory Councils to each of the HEW Institutes, National Advisory Council to the Office of Economic Opportunity, Advisory Council on Vocational Education, and National Advisory Council on Extension and Continuing Education.

End of the Spurt

Closely related to the life-cycle theory is the Short Public Responsibility Theory (SPURT), which holds that the maturing process of a bureaucracy involves movement away from service to publicly stated goals and toward service to the organization itself, i.e., toward an idler-gear composition. Accordingly, new agencies begin with a burst of idealistic activity and chiliastic rhetoric. They also begin with modest budgets, having cut to the bone to get their revolutionary programmatic concept past the Congress (the first time is always the hardest). They are full of fresh new employees, mostly young, attracted to the agency by all the publicity accompanying its birth. Everyone works very hard for the first year or so. They are dedicated. They also know that the President has not forgotten them yet and that the press will write human interest stories about the personnel—and news stories about agency achievements—for a while longer.

After a few years, the career civil servants in personnel and administra-

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tion will decide that the new agency has established itself. They will transfer in and begin to regularize procedures and communications systems and to tell people what the Civil Service regulations say they can't do. Top agency people will begin to acquire congressional contacts and to exchange kindnesses with members of the appropriations committees. People won't worry so much any more. Soon the new agency fades from public attention and everyone begins to talk about how Rome wasn't built in a day.

A press scandal or presidential ire may revitalize a hardened agency for a short while, but the odds are that a big reorganization and patience will ease the glare of attention. And even a modicum of skill might turn the crisis into increased appropriations by using the old saw about what squeaking joints need.

SPURT has already happened to the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Office of Economic Opportunity. It happened in record time to the Office of Minority Business Enterprise. It happened quite recently to the Peace Corps and the Department of Transportation. All these were established after John Kennedy took office, and they are all already full of idler-gears.

The third theory of idler-gear location is called the Soft-Hard theory of product identification (SOHA). It holds that any hard bureaucracy can be expected to have fewer idler-gears spinning than a comparable soft one. A hard bureaucracy is one which produces a tangible product, as the Army Corps of Engineers produces dams and canals or COMSAT produces satellites. A soft bureaucracy produces intangibles, like "government," which can scarcely be identified let alone measured. And within any agency, the jobs vary along the same soft-hard continuum—ranging from the assembly-line workers to the engineers to the production technicians to the planners to the program coordinators and developers and finally to the administrators.

Liberals, as a rule, don't like SOHA, because most of the quality-of-life bureaucracies get classified as squishy-soft and therefore selfish, although a group of economists have been trying to prove that the Pentagon's "national security" is the most intangible product of all. Conservative businessmen have also been turning away from SOHA, because the line between a hard bureaucracy and a business has become so thin that more and more large businesses are being labeled hard bureaucracies rather than private enterprises. This causes much discomfort to the businessmen.

So almost everyone now thinks that SOHA is a bad theory, but most people agree with an official of the Labor Department, who observed that "the long-run trend is toward the soft bureaucracy."

Holy Grail

The final theory of idler-gear location is again closely related to its predecessor. It is called the Deliver the Mail/Holy Grail dichotomous theory of problem protection (DETMAHOG). The idea here is that problem-solving (Holy Grail) agencies have an inherent propensity toward wheel-spinning. If such a bureaucracy is making no progress whatever toward the solution of its statutory objective, it is by definition a bureaucracy on welfare, idling in neutral. If, on the other hand, it is grasping its particular Holy Grail or moving toward doing so, the bureaucracy eats up its own raison d'etre in the process. Turning this story around, DETMAHOG theorists argue that a Holy Grail bureaucracy cannot persist over time without acquiring large numbers of idler-gears—either by solving its problem and not going away or by not solving its problem and sitting there.

Hence Holy Grail bureaucracies have a tendency to protect the problem they are mandated to solve. This tendency comes from the first law of survival, which bureaucracies observe

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with a special tenacity. Problem protection has been in fashion ever since the Marshall Plan people disbanded to go into foreign aid. It preserves the Indian problem, the poverty problem, the farm displacement problem, the economic development problem, the cigarette problem, the ecology problem, and the pornography problem, among others.

The other side of the coin, delivering the mail, refers to the growing routine tasks of the bureaucracy—measuring things, collecting data, and keeping records. The term itself springs from a famous quotation from a GS-15 in the Economic Development Administration: "Once the government delivers the mail and writes its checks, it's tired and can't do any more." The mail side of the dichotomy enjoys a bright employment future, for as every DETMAHOG theorist knows, administrative bureaucracy is required by centralization which is inexorably produced by interdependence which is always increased by specialization which is produced by freedom, the free market, progress, and the entry of liberated women into the labor force.

The problem, of course, is that the mail side of the bureaucracy appears dull, and it is especially depressing to have the bright side of the bureaucratic future be the dull part. Looking at things this way robs government of its new frontier image—of the idea that government is where it's at for bright young people of conscience. To top it all off, there is a corollary to DETMAHOG, which states that while idler-gears are required in Holy Grail bureaucracies, they are also *very likely* to be in Deliver the Mail ones.

Rickover's Solution

Despite recent refinements in LICTBOSS, SPURT, SOHA, and DETMAHOG, most people still hesitate to make precise numerical estimates of idler-gear percentages within any given bureaucracy. There are so many little variables to be figured in—so many people whose doings could possibly be useful in the future—that almost everyone looks at the theories for heuristic purposes only, to suggest fruitful topics with wide typicality for further research. Only Vice Admiral Hyman Rickover, the father of the atomic submarine, can be counted on for a forthright estimate of fat and wheel-spinning in his own department, the Pentagon. The Admiral finds that at least 50 per cent of the Pentagon payroll is a welfare payment (eat your heart out, Daniel P. Moynihan), the recipients of which should be fired. Recently, he outlined to a House Appropriations subcommittee his plan for stripping the Pentagon's idler-gears:

> On a given Monday morning, I would close off the fourth floor of the Pentagon and allow in only enough people to fill the first three floors.
>
> The next Monday, I would have the third floor roped off and permit only those who fill the first two floors to retain their jobs. That would be a good start.

But even the Admiral is hedging his bets these days. He followed that proposal with another which revised the idler estimate up to 67 per cent, but which recommended keeping that very vocal, well-educated horde on the payroll—only out of the way:

> Classify the Pentagon people A, B, and C. A does the work. B and C are given offices without secretaries, messengers, desks, rugs, telephones, typewriters, or water pitchers. They do get scratch pads on which to write letters to each other in longhand.
>
> The letters would be dropped in dummy mail boxes and there would be no collection . . . . They could show up for work and leave any time they desired. Vacations would be unlimited. Their checks would be mailed to their homes.
>
> You have all kinds of people in the Defense Department who are making work for the very few who are engaged in and capable of work.

There comes a point at which students of bureaucracy must recognize the limits of theory, and, with Admiral Rickover, take that bold leap of faith.

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One tangle in putting this bureaucracy mess into context is the increasing number of idler-gears everywhere—in businesses, universities, consulting firms, the Army reserve, churches (the first soft bureaucracies), and even magazines.

Admiral Rickover, in the course of declining to be interviewed on the general bureaucracy snarl, could not resist making the magazine point only somewhat facetiously.

"Are magazines effective?" he asked out of left field.

"Well, sir, I don't know what you mean."

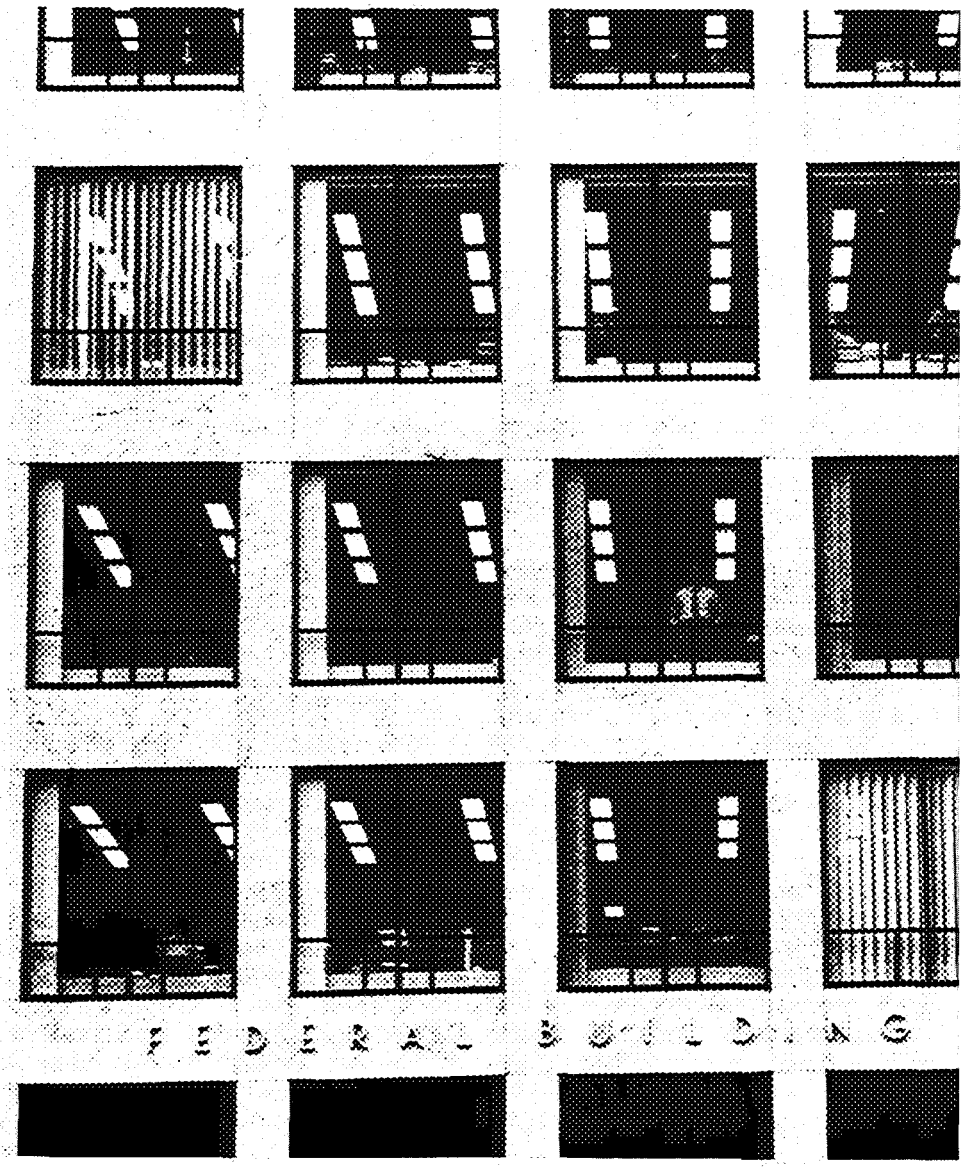
"Let's be specific. Is *your* magazine any more effective than the bureaucracy?"

"Probably so, because there are only three or four of us to spread bureaucracy among."

"That's a good point, but you'd probably be better off with just one. You tell your boss I said so."

"O.K. But then I might be fired."

"That's the whole problem, isn't it?" ■



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Suzannah Lessard

Let Those Hillbillies Go Get Shot

Some years back, waiting for the Long Island Railroad to pull into my hometown of St. James, I noticed something new on the familiar platform. On inspection, it turned out to be a small brick memorial to the Vietnam war dead. Rectangular steel plaques with names engraved on them had been affixed in one-and-a-half columns. It's a small town, but I'd gone away for high school, so I didn't recognize any of the names—a few could have been people I'd known in grammar school, but as their surnames were Kelley and Jones, I couldn't be sure. Then the train came and took me to New York—to Columbia University—to intelligent discussions of foreign policy, passionately anti-war friends, rallies in Sheeps Meadow, marches on the UN. In those discussions and marches one sensed frustration, yet there was always the feeling of pitching one's energy, however frail, into a corporate effort to stop the war. Reading those names for the first time, and then again and again, standing on that same platform and reading new ones, the columns growing plaque by plaque, that sense of straightforward corporate effort would cave in.

Partly the feeling was the sick helplessness most women experience when faced with military deaths. Protected because of your sex, all you can do is endure; not taking those risks yourself, even your protest is somehow unpersuasive. The St. James memorial, however, put me in double jeopardy of those feelings because I was also protected from the reality by class: those boys probably died because they didn't have the options of going to college, retaining lawyers and doctors, or facilely expressing their conscientious objection. The sense of being protected at the expense of others is a nasty feeling.

Yet the people making those sacrifices tended to support the war. Wearing a black arm band with the number of dead printed on it, for instance, was in a way taking unfair advantage of dead men, because, were they able to speak, they might well condemn your peace effort. And not only might those angry hecklers on the sidelines be their brothers and sisters, parents and wives, but the failure of the movement to attract their support—the great middle of the population from which the army was drawing its manpower—had everything to do with its ineffectuality.

The Privileged Sanctuary

The fatal class rift had yawned as soon as students and liberals began to decry the war as "immoral." "They're against our boys," came back the angry retort, and thus the pejoratives began to fly between the more extreme representatives of both sides: traitors—pigs, cowards—facists, faggots—war criminals. The antipathy soon took on a life of its own, influencing even the moderate, and making it possible years later for hard-hats to beat up peace demonstrators when they themselves believed we should get out of Vietnam; possible,

Adapted from an article in the April, 1972, issue of The Washington Monthly.

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even, for one college student to remark to another, as overheard by a friend, "Let those West Virginian hillbillies go get shot, they won't take me," without registering the implication of his words.

Obscured, though always lurking, was the fact that it was "their boys" who were over there to be for or against, who were coming back, more and more often in coffins, while the anti-war forces decried the cause in which those sacrifices had been made from the sanctuary afforded by grossly inequitable draft laws. When all is said and done, the gruesome truth that the less advantaged were sent to die in this war will surely rank high among the depravities spawned by the venture. Some in the sanctuary faced this; most evaded or distorted it. Yet the issue runs through the decade of activism, a mocking grimace, an elusive but crucial factor in the wrestling match with the angel of conscience, and possibly a clue to why that match ended in disheartened exhaustion.

The irony of being protected by the system you were fighting against was one of the constantly disconcerting conditions of the left-wing struggle in the sixties. A veteran of the civil rights movement says, "You always knew that you had a home-free base. After it was all over you could go back to your nice home." The effort was to link conscience to political action, but the safety catches made it difficult to gauge the depth of one's convictions. The draft presented the same problem. "It became obvious that it was pointless to say you 'won't go' if you weren't being asked to," wrote a member of The Resistance. Yet of all the areas in which people tried to confront the government, the draft was the least manufactured. After the graduate deferment was abolished, there were still lots of safety catches, but the small, hard chance existed that they would all fail. And that threat caused every young man who professed to be against the war to ponder what he would do if he were inducted. In those all-night bull sessions, formal symposiums, and internal mullings which accompanied that mass pondering, many shifting perspectives were probed—the problem of sorting out plain fear from ethical objection, the efficacy of going to jail, the consequences of going to Canada, the willingness to do either. In the process of any serious discussion, the question of those who *were* going, and why, would almost inevitably come up.

Darwinian Selection

The 1966 deferment test, an inroad on the undergraduate sanctuary, resurrected at least a glimmer of the overall inequity issue. The test selected out of the undergraduate pool the less-academically successful students, threatening, at one point, to take the bottom half of the freshman class, bottom third of the sophomores, and bottom fourth of the juniors. Seniors applying to graduate school had to make the top quarter of the class or take an army test. The outcry was immediate. Students will try to take easy courses and apply to lesser colleges, said some. The test favors utilitarian skills, said others. Darwinian selection, said still others. Another issue raised was that students from poor backgrounds tend to be less well prepared for the challenge of the classroom and hence would be discriminated against; more blacks will fail, said Adam Clayton Powell. But the shock effect of the measure must have been that bright students had to face their less advantaged friends and realize that the difference in their ability might possibly mean the difference between life and death, prison or freedom.

A fairly active movement grew to stick together and thwart the measure. Professors refused to submit class rank, or gave uniform grades. Until it was made clear they were not in the running, girls pledged to purposely do badly in order to give their male colleagues a better chance. The army test itself, which one took if one's

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rank was borderline, or if one wanted to challenge a low rank, became a focal point for protest, and a rash of sit-ins at induction centers where the tests were given broke out across the country. But the obvious way to object was to refuse to take the test, a measure which, if your rank was low, entailed losing your 2-S status for sure. As a result, many of the demonstrators who had been blocking the doorways got up and went in to take the test. Those who continued to sit in probably could afford to because their high rank made it unnecessary to take the test.

Blatantly contradictory as their behavior was, it's hard to get outraged at those who left sit-ins designed to discourage people from taking the test in order to take the test themselves, because the consequences of not doing so would have been so drastic, and because so few had really thought out their feelings about the system of selection. The incidents, however, provide a perfect image: certainly those who left sit-ins for tests, and even those who merely heard about the incidents, must have suffered at least a mild case of that confused paralysis that sets in where earnest desire to end the war meets the inequity of the draft. One doesn't have to think very far to see that if the ranking was "Darwinian" and "discriminatory," the whole 2-S deferment was much more grossly so; that if the distinction between better and worse students is unjust, surely the distinction between students and non-students is an outrage. Yet, at the time, that almost inevitable conclusion was largely avoided, a disembodied specter hovering over the deferment test protests as it hung over the whole anti-war movement. The same specter hung over the accusation of professors by students that when they flunked students they helped man the war effort, or the outrage of those who said that when Columbia expelled Mark Rudd they might as well have sent him to the front lines in Southeast Asia. The question of who had been taking Rudd's place and why he was there instead of Rudd, never quite got asked.

Egalitarian Imprisonment

Another area in which the issue was kept alive was in The Resistance, a group which sought to end the war through resistance to the draft, and which began to grow as general opposition to the war escalated and students no longer could be sure of escaping the "endless catacombs." The recommended way of resisting was to give up whatever class-related deferment you might have, thus precipitating induction, and then refuse induction, be prosecuted, and go to jail. Jail was chosen primarily as the most effective protest, based on the idea that the nation would become unbearably disturbed to see a lot of "nice young men" imprisoned for their beliefs (more disturbed than by a lot of others coming home in coffins?), but also because it was an alternative open to anybody, rich and educated, or not. While the hope that they might actually hurt the army's supply of manpower quickly died, jail was the measure which allowed you, hypothetically, to face the guy who filled the quota in your stead because he, too, could choose it. The same hypothetical confrontation would be considerably more difficult if you had to say to him that you had gotten out by hiring a lawyer which he couldn't afford, or by pleading C. O., which he, less trained in verbal skills, could not hope to do successfully.

Those who belonged to The Resistance, or who wrestled with the same awareness, seeking to reconcile not going to Vietnam with their abhorrence of an unfair draft, and the public figures like Yale President Kingman Brewster and Senator Edward Kennedy, who tackled the problem as a separate issue, never linked up. Perhaps one reason was that many who spoke out against the inequity did so while still believing in the war. Mendel Rivers, for instance, was Kennedy's counterpart in the

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House of Representatives, vowing to stop those loopholes through which "buzzards and vermin" were escaping. The editorial page of *Life* stated in 1965, "The frustrating vital half-war in Vietnam makes the need for a well-trained, efficient U. S. military establishment more obvious than ever. And yet the way we select our soldiers to fight such wars could scarcely be more unfair than it is today. Those who escape, by and large, are those with the means to continue their education until they reach the 'safe' age of 26." This was not a stand which would appeal to a draftable young man against the war.

Biting the Bullet

It's worth noting that with a few exceptions, whatever protest did exist originated among those who were protected by the draft laws. "It was only when I had to face the possibility of being drafted and began talking the problem out that I became aware of the unfairness," comments one who faced the draft in 1968. But even inside that age group, awareness was generally very low, and as the gray zone expanded to include older and more conventional people, nothing much was heard from them on the subject. The more radical young, meanwhile, reaffirmed their identity by picking up Viet Cong flags and turning their cause from anti-war to pro-North Vietnam, further separating themselves from those who had died by North Vietnamese bullets. Most draftable people, quite understandably, held the attitude toward the draft which prevailed in the ghetto—you try to beat it—and were otherwise fairly fatalistic about it. When you did escape, you just felt lucky, not especially inclined to examine the ethical validity of the manner in which you escaped, particularly if it was legal. Also, after the graduate deferment was abolished, everybody felt threatened. Actually, though there are no statistics, it's my strong impression that the abolition of that deferment changed things very little. For whatever reasons, very few people I know, or know of, have ended up inducted, suggesting that some hidden mechanism has continued to protect the advantaged.

An indication of the insensitivity to this hidden horror of the war is the attitude, prevalent now among radicals, that the lottery is a perpetration of the war-makers. The lottery, though by no means eliminating all the options available to the well-off, is clearly a step towards fairness. Yet, with startling uniformity, radicals I spoke to about the relation of the unjust draft to the failure of the anti-war movement, retaliated with the statement that the lottery has defused the movement, as though, by implication, a more unjust draft had been in favor

Why the Peace Movement failed for so long

a comment on liberalism in America today

Sam Brown on "The Politics of Peace"
John Rothchild on "The Senate's lame Doves"
Suzannah Lessard on "Let Those Hillbillies Go Get Shot"
Taylor Branch on "Prisoners of War, Prisoners of Peace"

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of the movement. The lottery probably has defused some fervor because it eliminates suspense; far fewer are spurred by personal threat because most know right away that their chance of going is remote. What that implies about the motivations of anti-war crusaders aside, it seems highly likely to me that if a lottery had been in effect in 1965, and consequently far more sons of the rich and the intelligentsia were being inducted, profound and urgent opposition to the war would have developed far faster from those groups. Nor would the privileged have been as likely to cut themselves off from the general population, for they would have sensed the need the peace movement never faced up to—the need for getting out of the war, yet dealing at the same time with the anguish of those whose sons, brothers, husbands, and lovers had died in it. At the very least, the tone would have been critically different. To say that the institution of an impartial lottery is counterproductive to the war effort and therefore to be condemned, makes as much sense as the following elliptical remarks, written after the graduate deferment had been abolished, by Dorian Fliegel, then an Amherst student, in *The Nation*:

> The poor, who are now disproportionately unable to meet these standards, will now become the outstanding exempt group. This fact, especially reveals the hypocrisy of a society which meets the problems of structural inequality by exposing the educated and better-off to the draft to fight a war which is waged at the direct expense of the poverty programs and the burden of which is borne by the poor through inflation and an inequitable tax structure.

It seems reasonable that worn nerves are sensitive to the abrasive of criticism when the once-new activism finds itself washed up, fading, and defeated on the shores of the seventies. But there's significance in which nerves are sore, and perhaps some clues as to why we find ourselves beached. Bringing up the inequity of the draft often produces pique; another (and related) tender spot is touched by suggesting a connection between the violence of the young left and the rejection of what has become a traditional rite of passage in this country—going to war. In my experience, veterans of the political wars of the sixties respond in a very negative, almost hurt way to this probe, suspecting immediately that you are looking for such motives in order to discredit the seriousness of intention and the authenticity of the anger behind the activism.

Cathartic Courage

The militancy of the protests escalated along with the war, so that the images of cops beating kids were always superimposed on the immeasurably more violent images from Vietnam. While the scene at Chicago in '68 was horrifying, the minute one stepped back from it to look at the larger picture, it looked more like a brawl than a battle. The indignation of those beaten up became tinged with the self-pity of spoiled children, because what some suffered there was nothing compared to what others suffered in the jungles of Indochina, or, for that matter, to what black people all over the country suffer daily, and also because it had, in a way, been sought out. To some, at least, the "riots" were a great success, for it made "them" show their true colors in a "confrontation."

The morning after the Columbia bust, another great success, those with bandages around their heads were heroes sporting their red badges of courage. But the suspension of disbelief was fragile, for, as it happens, an ambulatory youth in an army jacket with a bandaged pate suggests a soldier, leading one to remember that outside the theater of the campus people were facing real and terrible wounds, not bumps on the head. Charging and being charged by cops may have been cathartic, but it involved a rather mild form of courage. And the enemy confronted there was so fearsome and oppressive that even

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during the build-up, as well as afterwards, we demanded in all seriousness that they give us amnesty and "drop charges." When real death came at Kent State, whatever illusion had existed was utterly stripped away. Only crackpots saw it as a bona fide life-and-death battle, in which at last "they" were fighting back. The gasp of horror was at what clearly had been a tragic mistake brought on by nervous, confused youth with bullets in their guns, meeting their frustrated, confused peers. No one thought "this is what it's all about." And the war went on.

It's easy now to say that militancy failed abysmally as a tactic, and that the greatest effect the tactic had was to isolate the movement from the general public. At the time, people were confronted with the fact that mild strategies had little effect. Asking themselves "what more can we do," they concluded, not illogically, that "more" meant something more shocking, more than just symbolic, more risky—to convince the warmakers of their seriousness. But whatever arguments could be made for militancy, they were powerfully reinforced by a need for it. While actual violence was employed by only a very small faction of the movement, there was throughout, at least among the young, and especially among the men who faced possible induction, the pervasive sense of testing oneself, which lends itself very neatly to the classical endeavor of "proving your manhood."

Anyone wrestling with the prospect of induction will wonder how big a part fear plays in his desire not to go. Fear of getting killed or maimed is a sign of health, but the courage to take such risks has become in this culture the mark of a man. And indeed, if one believes that sometimes wars do have to be fought, then you hope, for the sake of your self-esteem if nothing else, that under such circumstances you would pick up your share of the burden. So deciding not to go to a war, no matter how watertight your objection, will tend to set off tremors in the area of self-esteem. Even the rhetoric of the nonviolent Resistance is shot through with reactions against those tremors: "Be a Man, Don't Go"; "Girls Say Yes to Men Who Say No." Or this sudden declaration in the course of a recent, fairly low-keyed discussion: "Put it this way. Everybody who did go was chickenshit." In *The Resistance*, by Michael Ferber and Staughton Lynd, the authors stress the gutsy macho style which the group cultivated. "A fundamental part of the style was riding motorcycles," they write, and then, quoting David Harris: "I have a conception of what you do in emergencies that's gained from motorcycles. There is no defense on a motorcycle. . . . Nowadays, there are all of these laws, you have to wear helmets, jackets. We never would wear any of that. The only way to ride a motorcycle was in your T-shirt, with a pair of big dark glasses. . . . We all had friends killed on motorcycles. . . . We all knew that we could be killed. We had all gone through experiences on motorcycles when we knew we came close to dying. . . . I used to do things like get on my motorcycle and ride as hard as I could ride, taking every corner as fast as I could go until I nearly dropped it. . . . After teasing death for a while you came to feel immune to it."

Elsewhere they quote him again: "The nonviolence came as a function of a vision of adventurous, hell-bent, wild-west manhood. . . . I think my decision for nonviolence was to be a Gary Cooper who didn't *need* guns . . . . I think of all these things as strengths and out of them brewed up the style that makes sense to me. Out of them I've found a truth that is stronger without weapons than with. (In the gang I ran with in junior high school, carrying a weapon was considered 'chickenshit.') I am for salty, rugged, virile nonviolence."

This is one of the most rousing calls to nonviolence I have ever come across. To imply that Harris spoke

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that way because he was insecure about his masculinity would be absurd: would that all men could transform their sense of masculinity from aggression into this kind of winsome, half-laughing at yourself, self-testing. But it cannot be coincidence that a group which bent its resources towards resisting a war, the traditional proving ground of manhood, should develop a style so emphatically uncowardly and masculine.

"There was always this feeling that I have to live up to the cutting edge, the Viet Cong and the Panthers," said a young man recently. "A couple of times in demonstrations I was really scared, and then you come out of it and there was the good old Washington Monument." Whatever else you might say about them, it was clear that the Viet Cong and the Panthers really meant what they said, and further, were willing to put it into action, a clarity and internal freedom which was by no means easy for the middle-class concerned person to achieve. Every time you sought to pit yourself against the wrongdoers, you were likely to find feather pillows instead of your own cutting edge. And so, the next time, you pushed yourself further.

Plaque by Plaque

The terrible irony of all this is that the militancy which made it absolutely impossible for the movement to attract mass support was, in part, a reaction to not going to war. This reaction, in turn, was generated for many in the anti-war effort because they were protected by inequitable draft laws and other less explicit forms of privilege. And that inequity was the cause, at the very beginning, of the original split between the anti-war crusaders and the general population over, essentially, whether one was for or against "their boys." Set on that course, the monster only got bigger as frustration drove the movement into more desperate postures, while more and more sealed boxes were silently flown back to central points from which they were quietly shipped to less-than-posh sections of cities and towns in the countryside, where little war memorials were being embellished plaque by plaque.

Lots and lots of people striving for peace, especially the older people, many of whom were in positions of power or positions from which they could command an audience, did not embrace militancy (phlegmaticism might be a more appropriate word) nor adopt a locked posture of antipathy towards the hawkish population. Yet because most of them never seriously faced the inequity of the draft (it was, after all, their children who were protected), they never really wrestled with the problems of how we could get out of the war and not horribly violate those whose kin had died in it. Not suffering that anguish themselves, they were cut off from the huge numbers who did, and therefore imagined that the best way to get out was to admit it was a mistake and withdraw.

Yet, to the extent that the men in the two administrations which have overseen this disaster were motivated by humane considerations, that anguish was, and still is, the barrier which arises every time withdrawal is contemplated: how can you tell the people to whom the coffins have been delivered that those sacrifices were for nothing? Coming up against that barrier, the mind recoils and seeks other routes—escalation, going in for victory, or even half-hearted, wasteful continuation seem more acceptable.

Perhaps it's asking too much of the limited energies of the peace movement to say that it should have put pressure on the government to make the draft just—in effect to draft its own—rather than devoting all its force to simply stopping the war. But if at the very least we had merely recognized the atrocity of sending the less well-off to die, then we would also have seen the importance of facing the needs of those whose friends and

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relatives had given their lives. Then all the professors and columnists and editorialists and people in government who wanted to end the war might have been struggling with that barrier, metaphysically speaking, they could all have helped the President write that speech in which he announced withdrawal to the public who had suffered most from the war, helped him search for the words with which to bestow a Congressional Medal of Honor on bereft parents after he had made the announcement. Words may seem trivial, but the lack of them in this instance signifies a huge, uncharted territory, a mine field ever interposing itself between those in power and the stopping of the war. Now, with the lottery, the draft is more and more fair, calls have precipitously dropped as the fight has shifted to the air and American ground troops leave. Nevertheless, though the deed is done and part of history now, it still remains a roadblock on the route to withdrawal. That speech still has to be written.

Ronald J. Glasser

The Burn Ward

Edwards picked up the stethoscope from his desk. "Look," he said, "You can say what you want about the Army and its problems, but I learned this much from going home: the Army treats you better dead than alive. I know," he added quickly to keep the captain from talking. "I know, it was my fault. I shouldn't have got involved with taking the body back. But I did."

"It's coming," the corpsman said, stepping away from the window.

Edwards stuffed the stethoscope into his back pocket. "OK. Tell the ward master. Better fill the whirlpools. I'll be down at the landing pad." He pushed open the double doors to the burn unit.

The huge overhead lights were off, leaving only the night lights to flicker feebly across the shiny, tiled floor. He walked quietly down the center aisle of the ward, his footsteps echoing lightly ahead of him. The beds lining the wall were barely visible, the patients no more than lumps against the frames. From the far end of the ward came the faint mechanical hissing of a respirator. He stopped a moment near one of the steel-arched Stryker frames to listen. The machine's slow regular rhythm was almost soothing. How many times he'd heard it before. Someone had once said he'd signed more death certificates than any other doctor in Japan. Probably right, he thought, continuing on his way. At Kishine, the respirator was the sound of death, not life; in all his time there, he could not think of one patient who had got off the thing.

"Hi, Doc."

"Oh, Crowley," Edwards said, coming to a halt near the little cubicle at the back of the ward. "Sorry, I didn't see you in the dark."

The side curtain had been partially pulled. Stretched out on the bed, barely lit by the dials of the respirator, was a shadowy form.

"How's he doing, Sergeant," Edwards asked the ward master who was standing at attention by the

Ronald J. Glasser was a major in the U. S. Army Medical Corps, 1968-1970. This article is from his book, 365 Days *(George Braziller), and was published in the April, 1971, issue of* The Washington Monthly. *The story is true, but the names and dates have been changed.*

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machine that was slowly, insistently hissing air into and out of the charred body.

"Not too good, sir."

"What's his temperature?"

"105. It was 107 before we put him on the cooling blanket."

"Blood cultures growing out anything?"

"Yes, sir, the lab called back tonight—Pseudomonas pseudomallei. Major Johnson put him on IV [intravenous] chloromycetin and tetracycline."

Edwards bent over to look more closely at the restrained body spread-eagled across the frame. The air smelled sweet, like a dying orchard. "When did he come in?" he asked, peering at the grotesquely crusted body. Even the tips of his toes and fingers were charred and oozing, nothing had been spared.

"Four days after you left. Seventy per cent second degree and 15 per cent third. At least Major Johnson thought it was second degree, but it's beginning to look like it's all third."

Edwards examined the crust about the boy's swollen neck and chest. It had a sick metallic green cast to it. "When did he go sour?"

"He was doing fine until this morning. We had to give him Demerol every time he went into the whirlpool, but he's very hard core. Nice kid. Then yesterday, he became confused and agitated. On the night shift his temp spiked and he became unconscious. The surgeons trached him today, and Dr. Johnson put him on the respirator this evening. The evacs should be in soon, Major."

"Yeah, that's where I'm going. I'll check on him later."

"No need, sir, you'll have your hands full. I'll have you called if anything changes."

As he walked away, Edwards could hear Crowley drawing the curtains closed behind him. The stairwell was empty and he walked slowly down to the first floor and out onto the concrete walkway.

It was summer outside and the night was as warm as indoors. He cut across the empty silent field separating the hospital's squat buildings from the helipad, where the red lights of the landing strip flickered softly in the misty dark. Far away he heard the muffled dull thudding of the chopper whopping its way through the heavy air, and suddenly he felt alone and desperately tired.

"Gentlemen: You have been assembled here at Yokota Air Base to escort these bodies home to the continental United States. Each body in its casket is to have, at all times, a body escort. Those caskets on the plane that do not at the present time have an escort will have them assigned at Oakland. Whatever the case, no casket will be allowed to leave the Oakland area without a proper escort. Escort duty is a privilege as well as an honor. An effort has been made to find an escort whose personal involvement with the deceased or presence with the family of the deceased will be of comfort and aid. Your mission as a body escort is as follows: to make sure that the body is afforded, at all times, the respect due a fallen soldier of the United States Army. Specifically it is as follows: 1) to check the tags on the caskets at every point of departure; 2) to insist if the tags indicate the remains as non-viewable that the relatives not view the body. Remember that non-viewable means exactly that—non-viewable. . . ."

Grimly, with the chopper coming nearer—louder—Edwards walked up a slight rise, past a small, dimly lit sign:

KISHINE BARRACKS
109th UNITED STATES
ARMY HOSPITAL
United States Army, Japan
Burn Unit

"Coastal Airlines loads the bodies on an angle. Be sure that if the body you are escorting is being carried by Coastal Airlines that the caskets are

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loaded head down—this will keep the embalming fluid in the upper body. If the body is loaded incorrectly, namely, feet down, the embalming fluid will accumulate in the feet, and the body may, under appropriate atmospheric conditions, begin to decompose."

By the time he reached the evac area, the floodlights were on and the chopper had landed. Coming in from the dark around the back of the evac building Edwards was dazzled by the sudden lights. The Huey, low and glistening, its rotors still whirling, sat like a toy exactly in the middle of the arc lights. Its crew chief and co-pilot were already in the open hatchway unstrapping the litters from their carrying hooks. Edwards watched unseen while the corpsmen hurried out to the chopper to off-load the patients. The choppers usually came in about 10 in the morning, but when a bad burn was evac'd to Japan, they were flown in the same night. Burns are a very special kind of wound, and no physician anywhere wants the responsibility of caring for them, not even for a little while. For openers, burns look bad and the patients die.

"Each of the next of kin listed in the deceased 201 file has already been visited by a survivor assistance officer. This was done in person by an officer in uniform from the nearest army unit. Every effort is made to pick an officer from a similar racial and economic background. These families have already been convinced of the death by either the presentation of personal effects or the relating of an eyewitness report from a member of the deceased's unit. You need not convince the deceased's relatives. The point to remember is that the survivor assistance officer has been there before you and the next of kin have already accepted the death."

He was standing in the reflected glare of the landing lights, with the windy noise of the chopper rushing past him.

"Sir. Sir?" one of the corpsmen was shouting above the whining of the motor. "One of 'em's got a head wound, the other is just burned."

"Call the neurosurgeon," Edwards shouted back. He gave the empty chopper one more look and then followed the medic into the air evac area. By the time he reached the building, the medics had placed the two litters on the movable stretcher racks and one of them, working on the patient nearest the door, was already setting up an IV.

"He's OK, Major," the air evac sergeant said. "The head injury's over there."

"One hundred and seventy," the corpsman said as Edwards approached the litter. The wounded soldier, his head wrapped, was lying unconscious on his back, with the blood pressure cuff still wrapped around his arm. "I figured I'd leave the cuff on, sir. He don't look too good."

"I'll give you that," Edwards said. He began to unwrap the gauze from around the patient's head. The boy was breathing; other than that he looked dead. Edwards pinched his neck, but there was no response. As he unwound the gauze it became wet and then blood-soaked. Now he was down to the four-by-four surgical pads, and finally to the wound itself. Carefully he lifted up the last pack. Despite himself, he closed his eyes.

"He's 47 per cent burned," the sergeant said, reading the cover sheet of the soldier's medical record. "Took an AK round a little in front of the right eye. Removed the right eye, traversed the left orbit, removing the left eye and came out near the left temple, apparently blowing out the left side of his head."

"Don't worry. I'll be careful, Bob. Honest, I'll be careful. . . ."

"Send him to neurosurgery," Edwards said. "We'll treat his burns

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up there."

"An IV?"

"No, just send him up."

He walked across to the other wounded trooper. The corpsman had just got the IV started.

"Sorry it took so long, sir," he said. "Hard to find a vein."

The boy was awake, nervously looking at the needle the corpsman had stuck into the back of his hand.

"Hi," Edwards said. "How do you feel?"

The soldier looked up at him apprehensively. The skin on his face had been seared red and all his hair and eyebrows and lashes had been burnt away.

"I know you're nervous," Edwards said soothingly. "Just try to relax. I'm the chief of the burn unit. I'll be your doctor for a while until you get better." As he pulled back the blanket the soldier grimaced. "Sorry," he said, lifting the cover more carefully.

The burns, red and raw, ran the whole charred length of the boy's body. Unconsciously Edwards began adding up the percentages of burned area, tallying them in his mind. He suddenly realized what he was doing, and for a moment, as he stood there staring at the burns, he looked stricken. "How did it happen?" he asked gently, carefully dropping back the covers.

"I. . . I was carrying detonators. . . ."

"Dear Bob: We are fighting very hard now. I haven't written Mom and Dad about it. I don't want to worry them. But we are getting hit and badly. I'm the only first lieutenant in the company who hasn't been hit yet. And last week I lost two RTO's. They were standing right next to me. It gets a bit spooky. I know what you said about my flack vest, but you haven't been here and you just don't know how hot it can get. On the move, it's just too damn heavy. You can't carry a 60-pound rucksack in 110 degree heat and an 11-pound flack vest. I make the point wear his, but then someone else carries his gear. It's like your complaint about patients demanding penicillin—sometimes you just can't use it. It's the same with a flack vest. Besides, it wouldn't stop a round and that's what we've been getting lately. But I'll wear it when I can. By the way, you're beginning to sound like Mom. About what's been happening lately. I'm not complaining, don't get the wrong idea. There is, honestly, something very positive about being over here. I can see it in myself and my men. Not the war itself, God knows that's hopeless enough, but what happens to you because of it. I'll never be the same again. I can feel myself growing. Unfortunately you only see one end of it. That's a bit sad, because there are other endings and even middles. A lot of guys get out of here OK, and despite what they say, they're better for it. I can see it in myself. I'm getting older over here in a way that I could never do at home or maybe anywhere. For the first time in my life, everything seems to count. All the fuzziness is gone, all the foolishness. I can't believe the things that used to bother me, or even that I thought were important. You really see yourself over here. It works on you, grinds you down, makes you better. Got to go. Thanks for the R & R. Say Hi to all the guys in the burn unit."

"What?" Edwards said.

"Detonators. I must have taken a round in my rucksack. They just blew up and then I was on fire. Tried to tear my gear off, but my hands. . . ."

"It's all right," Edwards said. The evac sergeant handed him the patient's medical jacket. Quickly turning the pages, he read: "Eighty per cent second degree and third degree. Debrided under general anesthesia at the 60 evac, Chu Ci. Six liters plasmonate. . . catheterized. . . furacin and sterile dressings. . . Demerol . . 64 mg q three hours." He looked on the cover sheet. David Jensen, MOS B11;

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1/30 E-2, Fourth Division, 20 years old.

"Twenty years old," he thought, handing back the chart. Grant's age.

"David," he said wearily.

"Yes, sir."

"The first thing we're going to do is put you in a whirlpool bath to soak off your bandages and remove what dead skin we can. It's going to hurt."

"Yes, sir," David said, his voice wavering.

"If it hurts, just let us know. Is that understood?"

"Yes, sir."

"You don't have to call me sir."

"Yes, sir, thank you, sir."

"Take him to C-4," Edwards said to the corpsman. "Tell Sergeant Dorsey I'll be right there. And David. . . "

"Yes, sir."

"Burns look and feel a lot worse than they are. You're going to get better."

"Yes, sir."

Edwards watched the corpsman wheel the boy out of the evac area, and then left the area himself to go to the neurosurgery ward. It was a long walk. Like all army hospitals, Kishine is fantastically spread out, its buildings and wards acres apart so that no one shell or bomb can get it all. By the time he got to the ward, the neurosurgeon was already in the treatment room. The patient, partially hidden by the nurse and doctor, was lying naked on the treatment table. There were blood-soaked clothes and bandages all over the floor. Cramer turned his head for a moment, looked at Edwards, and went back to work.

"His frontal lobe is torn up," Cramer said. "I'm going to have to take him up to the operating room and save what I can. What do you think about his burns?"

Looking over Cramer's shoulder Edwards saw that the surgeon's fingers were deep inside the half shell of the boy's skull. "Don't worry about the burns," he said, turning to leave.

"Oh, Edwards," Cramer said as he reached the door. "I know how close you two'd become. I'm sorry."

"Regardless of the branch of service: The emblem of the Infantry, crossed rifles, will be carried on every coffin. The deceased, where the remains are viewable, will be buried in full military uniform. The emblems on his uniform will be that of the service to which he was attached at the time of his death."

He walked down the corridor to the elevator. Leaning wearily against the wall, he pressed the button, and without looking stepped in even as the door was opening, almost colliding with one of the patients. "Sorry," he said, moving over to the other side of the elevator. The patient, his bathrobe slung over his good shoulder—the other was wrapped in a plaster cast—smiled politely, and was about to look away when he saw the doctor's name plate on his uniform.

"Excuse me, sir."

"Yes?"

"Do you have any relatives in Nam?"

"Yes," Edwards said, "I do."

"First Air Cav?"

"Yes."

"Is his name Grant?"

Edwards nodded as the elevator suddenly slowed to a stop.

"Your brother?" The door opened. "I thought so," the trooper said, obviously pleased. "You sort of look like him."

"Come on," Edwards said pleasantly, holding the door.

"I saw him about three weeks ago. There isn't a better platoon leader in the whole cav. But I can tell you this, they were handing him some shit to do, when I saw him. His unit was on their way to getting their ass whipped."

"Are you sure, Grant? Why don't you go into Tokyo? You only have a few days for your R & R. You might as well have a good time."

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"But I want to see what you're doing."

"It's not nice."

"And where do you think I've been?"

He had been surprised at how well Grant had handled himself in the burn unit. He had seen more than one visitor walking through the ward trying desperately to be natural, moving stiffly from bed to bed, smiling and talking as if the boys weren't burnt at all. When Grant visited, there were two ghastly 90 per cent burns stretched out, blistered and dying on their Stryker frames. Grant had stopped to talk to them and stayed with each much longer than he had to. He was very much at ease. He didn't ignore their wounds, or pretend not to see that they were so obviously dying. He simply talked to them, interestedly and honestly with a concern so palpable that no one could doubt his sincerity. He was one of them and, for a moment, watching his brother sitting by their frames, Edwards felt suddenly very much outside it all. He was very proud of his younger brother.

"I've seen worse, Bob. Really. . . a lot worse."

"Sir?"

"Yes, I know," Edwards said gently. "They did get whipped."

When he got back to the burn unit, he found David in the treatment area, already floating full length in one of the whirlpool baths, his head supported on a padded board to keep it above the waterline, the water gently churning about his burnt body. His IV bottle was still working, hanging down from a ceiling hook. A few of the dressings had already soaked off and the medic was picking them out of the water. Taking an admissions chart off the wall rack, Edwards sat down on a chair next to the huge tub.

"OK?" he asked.

David, clenching his teeth, nodded.

"David," he said, "we're going to debride you a bit—take off the dead skin. We are going to have to do it every day, a little bit at a time. That way it won't be as painful." David was looking anxiously at him. "Once you know what's going on, it won't be so bad. We're going to put you into the whirlpool every day and all the skin that is loose, or loosening, is going to be removed. It has to be done." He hesitated a moment and then went on matter-of-factly. "If we don't take it off, it just stays and decays, forming a place for bacteria to grow and divide, and you'll just get infected. That's what we want to avoid, because if the burns get infected no new skin will form. It's going to hurt, and I'll give you something for the pain when I think you need it."

"Yes, sir."

"I've been doing this a long time, David, and I know when it really hurts and when it doesn't. We're going to have to be doing this for some time and we don't want to make an addict out of you, so we're only going to use the pain medicine when we have to. I know you can do it. There have been a lot of troopers, just like you, through here, and I know you're as fine as they are."

David had been staring up at him the whole time. What was left of his lips were clamped tight against the pain of the water churning against his blistered skin. "Yes, sir," he said, his voice trembling.

"OK, John," Edwards said. David looked nervously from him to the corpsman. Pieces of dead skin were already floating free. The corpsman, kneeling down beside the tub, began picking off those pieces that were still attached but had been loosened. "How long have you been in Nam, David?"

"Five. . . five months," David said, watching the corpsman pick a chunk of skin off his chest. He had to tug to get it off. David grimaced, barely suppressing a groan.

"How do you like the Vietnamese

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women?" the medic asked.

"Don't know," David said, painfully engrossed in watching the corpsman go after another piece of his skin. "Didn't meet any gooks."

"How come?" the medic asked, scooping a piece of skin out of the water.

"We killed 'em all."

Suddenly David let out a scream and the scream, echoing off the spotless tile walls, pierced Edwards to his heart. His eyes clenched tight, the boy was fighting valiantly for control. Blood began oozing from the new patch of raw skin on his chest, and Edwards could see the tears rolling down his burnt cheeks.

"Where you from, Doc?" the cab driver asked.

"Japan."

"Oh," the cabbie said, pulling away from the curb, "thought so, saw the Fuji patch on your sleeve. Nice place, huh?"

"No," Edwards said.

"I heard that Japan was paradise."

"I work in a burn unit."

"Oh, get many burns over there?"

"There's a war on. Remember?"

"You mean, you get those guys in Japan?"

"Yeah," Edwards said, "We get those guys. . . "

"Major, Major?"

Edwards opened his eyes. It was the ward master. David was still there, sobbing.

"Excuse me, sir. Those flights back from the States are tough. I'm sure you haven't caught up with the time change. Why don't you take a sleeping pill and get some rest."

"Think I'll take your advice," Edwards said, closing his clipboard. He wrote a Demerol order for David and then went to his room. As tired as he was, though, he couldn't sleep. Every time he drifted off, he'd see Grant's tag: "Remains, non-viewable." And all that time in the States, he thought he could handle it. . . .

He woke up in the morning exhausted, put on his wrinkled uniform and went to the ward.

Johnson was already in the office. "Hi," he said, turning around from his desk. "You know you didn't have to work today—or yesterday, for that matter."

"I know." Edwards hung up his jacket. "There's really not much else to do."

Both he and Johnson had shared the same office for almost a year now. Johnson had been the plastic surgeon working with the burn unit at Duke University. He had been drafted and assigned to Kishine.

"You want to go on rounds?" Edwards asked.

Johnson pressed the button on the intercom. "Julian, we're gonna start rounds." He pushed himself away from the desk. "Let's go."

"How's the fellow on the respirator?"

"He died this morning," Johnson said, picking up his notes. "I told the corpsman to leave you alone."

After rounds, Edwards went down to the bacteriology lab and then to his office. Johnson had gone to X-ray to check on a few films. He sat down at his desk and looked at the two weeks of correspondence that had been piled neatly at the corner of his desk. He was reaching for the first letter when the intercom buzzed. "Major, Jensen's in the whirlpool."

"OK, be right there, thanks."

David was already in the tub, being debrided. Edwards knelt down by the side of the tub and checked the burns. At some places, on the thighs and chest, he could see down to the muscle fibers criss-crossing under the burnt fat. "David, I'm going to stop your IV," he said, straightening up. "You're going to have to start eating. The ward master told me you didn't touch your breakfast. Hurt?"

Chewing on what remained of his lips, David winced.

"Jessie, why don't you give him 25 of Demerol."

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"Yes, sir," the corpsman said.

"Why didn't you eat?"

"No one was there to feed me," David said, watching the corpsman open the medicine cabinet and fill the syringe.

"We don't feed you here," Edwards said. "You feed yourself. You've got to start using your hands sometime." He waited while the medic searched for a place to give the injection. "In his arm," he said.

The corpsman found a small, unburnt area near the elbow and plunged the needle into the skin. David, watching him, visibly relaxed. He turned his head on the board and looked at Edwards.

"We can help you grow new skin, stop your infections, graft you—if it comes to that. But it will all be for nothing if you leave here with all your joints tied down by scar tissue. If you don't exercise and keep the scar tissue and new skin over your joints loose and flexible it will tie 'em down like iron. All that new skin and scar that will be forming has a tendency to contract with time. If you don't keep it loose, you'll leave here as much a cripple as if someone had shot off your arms and legs. Your hands aren't that bad, David. We'll start today with them."

"But I can't hold a fork."

"We'll put wooden blocks on them, and as you get used to handling one size, we'll make the blocks smaller. Understood?"

"Yes, sir."

"You married, David?" Edwards asked.

"No."

"Engaged?"

"Yes, sir."

"Would you like me to write her for you?"

David closed his eyes. "No, sir, I don't think so."

"All right. I'll check on you later."

That evening, despite the fact that Johnson was on call, he went back to the ward. All the patients had been settled in for the night. The ward master was in the treatment room, cutting adhesive tape into 12-inch strips.

"What's new, White?"

"Nothing, Doc, really. Same old thing."

"How's Jensen doing?"

White put his scissors back into his pocket. "He's doing all right. We drew two blood cultures on him this evening and sent a titer off for moniliasis. He had some difficulty using the blocks, but he got a few bites down; seems as if the sulfamyelon is bothering him. Stinging him. You never know who it's going to bother."

Edwards walked out into the unit. David was on a Stryker frame halfway down the ward, lying on his stomach. White sulfamyelon cream was smeared all over his burnt back, buttocks, and legs.

"How's it going?"

"Fine, sir."

"The ward master told me that you did all right at supper."

"Yes, sir."

Later that evening, one of David's blood cultures began to grow out Pseudomonas arinosa, a bacillus resistant to most antibiotics. The bacteriology lab called the ward and the ward master called Edwards. He told the ward master to restart David's IV and put him on 200 mg of polymyxin every four hours.

The next morning, after rounds, Johnson got him alone. "About Jensen's polymyxin," he said. "Do you think his kidneys are good enough to handle that big dose?"

"What would you suggest?" Edwards said.

"You could destroy his kidneys with that much polymyxin."

"I could save him, too."

"If he's going to die," Johnson said, "he's going to die."

"You sure?"

"Well, he's 80 per cent burned and his blood culture is already growing out Pseudomonas."

When he came back to the ward, he found David lying on his back, and

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the corpsman was smearing on the last of the sulfamyelon, spreading it over David's charred stomach as if it were butter.

"This stuff stings, honest, Doc," David said. "It just keeps stinging."

"I know," Edwards said. "It does that sometimes, but it will get better with time. You sort of build up a tolerance to it. The point is that you need it now. It keeps your skin from getting infected and gives the new skin a chance to grow. Believe it or not sulfamyelon is one of the major breakthroughs in the treatment of burns."

"Can't I have something for the stinging?"

"No, David, I'm sorry."

That evening, down in the hospital bacteriology lab, his second blood culture started growing out another patch of pure Pseudomonas. When Edwards came to work up the new admissions, he stopped by to see David and found him on his stomach again.

"How does the skin grow back?" David asked, speaking to the floor. The day before he had mentioned there were 16 different colors in the floor tiles. "I mean, where's it gonna come from?"

"From you."

"Yeah," David said. "How?"

Edwards pulled up a chair. "You have enough, you don't really need very much," he explained. "The skin grows back from the areas around the hair follicles; the follicles go down pretty deep, down into the area below the skin. Below the burns the new skin grows out from the lining of these follicles, like grass out of a valley. These linings are like nature's reserves. The new skin just keeps growing out from them, creeping over the burned area, until all these little growing areas come together."

"Why am I going to have to be grafted then?" David said sullenly.

Edwards sensed the despair in his question. "Sometimes," he said, trying to sound reasonable, "if the burns are too deep, deep enough to destroy the follicles, then there is no skin to grow back, so we have to graft."

"Where are you going to get the skin for that?"

"From your friends, David," Edwards said gently, "from your friends."

The morning culture again grew out Pseudomonas. That afternoon they took David to the operating room and covered his legs and part of his stomach with cadaver skin. When Edwards visited him again that evening, he complained that his head hurt and the sulfamyelon was stinging even more.

"What will you do when you get home?" Edwards asked.

David was sullen. "School, I guess."

"You've got to be more positive than that," Edwards said coaxingly.

"I was positive before I got burned."

"I'm telling you, you're going to be OK."

"I didn't see it," David said reproachfully. "I was just walking. I wasn't even point. I swear to God, I didn't even hear it. Can you believe that?" he said loudly. "I couldn't even goddamn hear it."

Within three days, the cadaver grafts failed, refused to take, and Edwards had to order it pulled off, like the rest of the dying skin. David, lying in the water, saw him as soon as he walked into the treatment room.

"I'm handling it, dammit," he said belligerently. "Just leave me alone, will you? Just goddamn leave me alone."

That evening David ignored his presence.

"I saw you with some letters this afternoon," Edwards said, noting how the whitish scar tissue under David's chin had a pale greenish cast to it. "Nice handwriting. Your girl?"

"No, my family."

"What did they say?"

"It's in the drawer."

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Edwards opened the drawer of the nightstand next to the frame. It was a rather bright letter, careful, measuredly written, filled with support and concern. There was a section about Carol, how much she loved David and how happy she was that he was finally out of the fighting.

"Did you answer?" Edwards asked.

"I didn't know how."

"They know you're burned." Edwards refolded the letter. "It seems to me they're holding up quite well. The least you could do is help them out."

David slowly turned his head. His eyes, hollow holes, stared coldly and defiantly at Edwards. "I've been throwing up all day. I can't keep anything down."

"Yes," Edwards said calmly, putting the letter back in the drawer. "I know."

"I'm not going to make it, am I? No, no, don't interrupt. I know I'm not. That stuff you keep putting into my IV bottle—the only other guys who get it are the ones on respirators. I know," he said, almost triumphantly. "I've checked on the way to the whirlpool. I know." It was all there in his eyes—the pain, the suffering, the loss of belief. It caught Edwards off guard.

"I told you about the pain, didn't I?" he said angrily. "Have I bullshitted you yet? Look, if you were going to die, I'd let you know. Right? I'd give you the chance to tie things up, understand?" A certain distance entered David's stare, a vague confusion that was more pathetic than his glaring hopelessness.

Edwards got up. "Now, dammit," he said, "I want you to think of an answer to that letter. I'll be back in the morning and I want an answer. Is that clear?"

Depressed and angry, he left the ward. Outside he passed groups of patients from the other wards, some standing around talking, others doing nothing, or being pushed around in wheelchairs by their buddies. Johnson was right, he thought. David would die. He was probably, all things considered, dead the moment the round hit the rucksack.

The phone woke him a little past three the next morning.

"Major!"

"Yeah." Edwards fumbled across the night table for the lamp switch.

"This is Sergeant Cramer. Jensen's temperature just spiked to 105."

"OK," Edwards said, switching on the light and sitting up. He cleared his throat. "I'll be right over." Even as he was hanging up, he was reaching under the bed for his shoes.

The ward master met him at the entrance to the unit and followed him hurriedly down the ward.

"He's becoming disoriented."

"What about the cultures?" Edwards asked quickly. "Still Pseudomonas?"

"No, this morning's grew out Klebsiella."

David was lying on the frame. All the covers were off and he was trembling.

"106," the medic said, reading the stool-smeared thermometer.

"Better add some kanamycin and Keflin to the chloromycetin. How's the blood pressure?"

"Stable."

"How much kanamycin and Keflin?" Cramer asked.

"A lot, a lot. Just get it!"

Cramer looked at him and quickly left to get the antibiotics.

"David, David," Edwards leaned over the frame. "David!"

Slowly he opened his eyes, but there was no light in them, no gleam.

"Listen," Edwards said, lowering his voice. "I'm going to have to put you on a cooling blanket. It's not going to be comfortable, but your temperature. . ."

"I can't think of anything," David said, closing his eyes again.

"He's been confused for the last hour," the medic said.

A moment later, the ward master

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came back with the antibiotics already drawn up into two syringes. While he shot the drugs directly into the IV bottle, Edwards said, "We'd better put in a central venous pressure. How's his urine output?"

"Down 60 cc in the last two hours."

"Does he have any blood cross-matched?"

"Four units."

"Respirator?"

"There's one down in central supply. We can get it any time."

"What about his moniliasis titers?"

"Still normal."

"White count?"

"The lab technicians are doing it now."

"Let's see his electrolytes."

"Doc."

Surprised, Edwards turned around. David had stopped shivering.

"Doc!"

Edwards hurriedly bent over the frame.

David stared up at him, his eyes strangely clear and deep. "You didn't have to come, not all the time."

"I wanted to," Edwards said.

"They told me about your brother and your taking him home." David was about to go on when, gasping, he suddenly bolted upright and, struggling against the restraints, vomited up a great flood of bright red blood.

Dying in the burn unit is not normally that dramatic. There is usually very little blood; burns die inside out, down at the cellular level, where the billions of struggling cells just simply give up. It is for the most part a kind of gentle going; breathing becomes labored and distant, circulation falls apart, hearts dilate, livers and spleens grow to twice their size, lungs gradually fill with fluid, and there is always a certain period of confusion. But after it, a comfortable time of unconsciousness, where nothing is done and everything—even the last breath—is rather a leisurely giving up.

Suddenly, with the blood still welling out of his lipless mouth, David went rigid and, arching backwards, collapsed against the frame. Edwards grabbed the suction off the wall and, pulling open David's jaw, began sucking out his mouth, trying to clear the blood and vomit out of his airway. The gasping stopped and there was the more comfortable sound of air moving in and out.

"Get the blood," Edwards ordered, reaching for the oxygen mask. He was turning up the oxygen flow, just as Cramer came running back with the blood.

"Call Johnson. Set up a cut-down tray, and get a tracheotomy set."

The ward master unhooked the IV from its bottles. "The blood is still ice cold," he said.

"Just hang it," Edwards ordered, holding open David's jaw, trying to get out more of the blood. "Just goddam hang it. And call the general surgeon. . . David! David!" He pressed the oxygen mask over the boy's mouth and he could feel the new skin slipping away under the pressure of the mask's rubber edges. "David! David! Can you hear me? OK, listen, you have an ulcer. We might have to operate tonight. You have a lot of blood and stuff in your lungs. I'm going to have to put you on a respirator. It will help you breathe, so I'll have to make a little hole in your windpipe. It won't hurt." He looked up, checking the blood running down into the IV tubing. "It's just to help you breathe. Honest. Just to breathe."

The corpsman had set up the tracheotomy, and Edwards held the oxygen mask in place while the ward master quickly cleaned David's neck as best he could. The noise coming from inside the lungs was getting louder again. Even with the oxygen David was having to fight to breathe.

"I'm going to make the hole now," Edwards said, removing the mask. Little bits of skin came away with it.

"Doc," David gasped. "Take me home, too. . . Please, Doc, I don't want to go alone. . . ." ■

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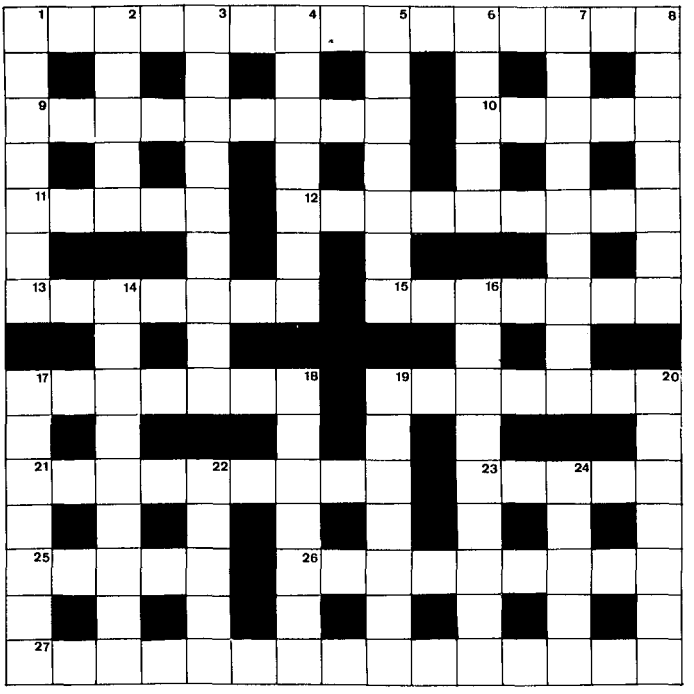
The Political Puzzle

by John Barclay



ACROSS

1. All-too-common unplanned trips. (7, 2, 6)
9. Reactions to Jenks' reek. (4, 5)
10. It's not hard to get loner to sign up. (5)
11. It's not hard to see picot stitch. (5)
12. Estimated from mixed up label in what he saw. (9)
13. A saltier group of detectives. (7)
15. These can be hot or well or main. (7)
17. Polish region to let lie as is. (7)
19. His charges should make you scarce. (7)
21. How Lee ran gas buggies, to be comparatively unspecific. (2, 7)
23. Friendly greeting in miscellany is way of life. (5)
25. He made trout sing. (5)
26. See Scot Anne in foreign lake. (9)
27. Nice words to offer fleet farm cookie. (6, 3, 2, 4)

DOWN

1. Counterfeit removed, but still misleading. (4, 3)
2. Passive look in finer things. (5)
3. They have brought crime to a new high level. (9)
4. Where 3 Down took crime from? (7)
5. Run out of town on routes South. (7)
6. Where to be near a gladiator. (5)
7. Lean pairs used for 1 Across. (9)
8. Refers to looking up blunt word in ocean. (7)
14. Foil thing with this perspective. (2, 5, 2)
16. Alighting here is rest chore. (9)
17. History in Booth word makes one jumpy. (7)
18. Can't rip coat of this color. (7)
19. Team to tan Los Angeles at home. (7)
20. On second exam, credit cheek with color. (7)
22. Jules Verne needed this for his stories. (5)
24. Capital thought in oil peace rather than oil war. (5)

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2, 3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word. Answers to last month's puzzle are on page 4.

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POLITICAL BOOK NOTES

Public affairs books to be published in February.

American Military Commitments Abroad. Roland A. Paul. Rutgers, $10. Straightforward description covering every place but Vietnam, based on the author's work as a Senate investigator. If much of the book reads like old stuff, it's only because Paul did such a good job uncovering the facts three years ago for the Symington committee hearings.

Bureaucracy and the Public: A Reader in Official-Client Relations. Elihu Katz, Brenda Danet. Basic, $15. If a book is thick enough, it can have everything: "Trust and the Cab Driver," how Israel treats its newcomers, and "Bureaucratic Man: A Portrait and an Interpretation." Half the pieces are in normal English, half in sociologicalese. Worth a look if you didn't see the pieces the first time they were published.

The Corrupt Kingdom: The Rise and Fall of the United Mine Workers. Joseph E. Finley. Simon & Schuster, $8.95. Already outdated by the ouster of Tony Boyle, this workmanlike history of the United Mine Workers is marred by its almost total dependence on secondary sources and public documents.

Design of Cities. Edmund N. Bacon. Viking, $17.50.

The Fall and Rise of Jimmy Hoffa. Walter Sheridan. Saturday Review, $10.95.

The Fleischmann Report on the Quality, Cost, and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education in New York State—Volume I. Viking, $14.95, $6.95.

Impeachment. Raoul Berger, Harvard. Gerry Ford made a serious error when he said during his 1970 campaign to impeach Justice Douglas that an "impeachable offense" is whatever Congress "considers it to be." For it provoked Berger to take 301 tendentious and heavily footnoted pages to prove, with appropriate references to English Common Law and the Founding Fathers, that while the English Parliament has virtually unlimited powers of impeachment, Congress does not.

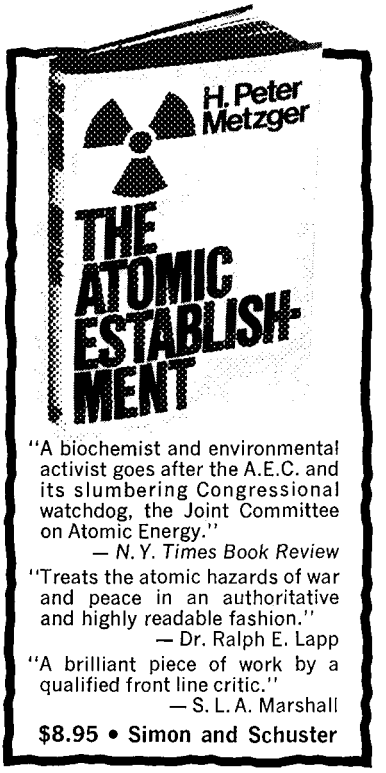
The Inferior Sex. Wallace Reyburn. Prentice-Hall, $5.95.

Investigating the FBI. Pat Watters, Stephen Gillers, eds. Doubleday, $7.95. Papers from the 1971 Princeton conference, ranging from scholarly discussions to I-was-a-G-man tales of life inside the Bureau. None of Hoover's friends showed up, so the overall balance tips against the FBI. A valuable collection.

Juror Number Four Edwin Kennebeck. Norton, $6.95. This uninsightful but well-intentioned account of the New York City trial and acquittal of 13 Black Panthers climaxes with Kennebeck gushing: "I began to feel that more light was streaming through the window than the sun himself could have provided."

The Kennedy Neurosis. Nancy Clinch. Grosset & Dunlap, $10.

Life Insurance. Joseph M. Belth. Indiana, $6.95. One wishes this book were better, because a consumer handbook in this field is desperately needed. While Belth is good on details, his premises are often those of the industry, dismissing critics as having "an abysmal lack of knowledge about the fundamentals of life insurance." Belth insists that consumers "make their own decision" between straight life and term insurance, although Herbert Denenberg, Pennsylvania's reformist insurance commissioner, never



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mentioned in this book, says that "cash life has been used as a device to obscure costs and confuse the public."

A Long View From the Left: Memoirs of an American Revolutionary. Al Richmond. Houghton Mifflin, $8.95. While the vulgar Marxism of the political analysis proves embarrassingly dated, the personal reminiscences of life and work in the American Communist Party, from the Brooklyn of the thirties to the Berkeley of the sixties, are interesting and gracefully written.

Man, Society and the State. Peter T. Manicas. Putnam, $6.95.

Man's Aggression: The Defense of the Self. Gregory Rochiln. Gambit, $7.95.

Must the Seas Die? Colin Moorcraft. Gambit, $6.95.

National Security and American Society: Theory, Process, and Policy. Frank N. Trager, Philip S. Kronenberg. Kansas, $8.95.

The New Socialist Revolution: An Introduction to Its Theory and Strategy. Michael P. Lerner. Delacorte, $8.95.

The Papers of Adlai E. Stevenson, Volume II: Washington to Springfield, 1941-1948. Walter Johnson, Carol Evans, eds. Little, Brown, $15.

Places for Learning, Places for Joy: Speculations on American School Reform. Theodore R. Sizer. Harvard, $7.50. Amid the spate of recent books on American education, this slim volume by the new headmaster of Phillips Academy, Andover, stands out in its ability to be pragmatically reformist without losing its sense of outrage.

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The Rights of Mental Patients. Bruce Ennis, Loren Siegel. Richard W. Baron, $4.95, $.95.

The Rights of Prisoners. David Rudovsky. Richard W. Baron, $4.95, $.95.

The Second American Revolution: Some Personal Observations. John D. Rockefeller, III. Harper & Row, $6.95.

Stealing: How America's Employees Are Stealing Their Companies Blind. Mark Lipman. Harper's Magazine Press, $6.95.

The Tarnished Shield. Col. George Walton. Dodd, Mead, $7.95.

Time to Go Home. Rabbi Meir Kahane. Nash, $7.95.

Uncle Tom's College. Ann Jones. Praeger, $6.95. Well-written, detailed portrait of a small, black, urban college at which the author (white) taught English. Thomas College is a closed world in which the self-serving president and his court-like administration reign, in which power is maintained over the faculty by methods which include spying and slander, and in which the students and educational quality are the last considerations. Tangential at points, but on the whole a vivid and fascinating book.

The United States and the Developing Economies, revised 1973. Gustav Ranis, ed. Norton, $8.95.

The Uprooted. Oscar Handlin. Atlantic Monthly Press, $8.95. A pompous history of European immigrants to America. Handlin's manufactured subjectivities applied to "immigrants" in general are irritating and uninformative and swamp the solid observations and interesting nuggets of social history.

The VIP With Psychiatric Impairment. Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry. Scribner's, $4.95, $1.95.

The Walden Two Experiment: The First Five Years of the Twin Oaks Community. Kathleen Kinkade. Morrow, $7.95.

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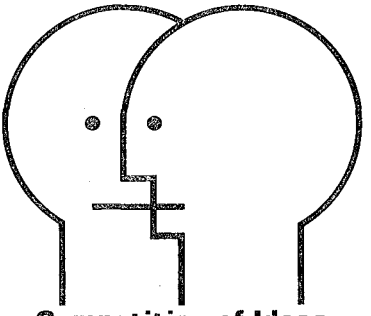

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